

U.S. Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee
Meeting
Thursday, November 16, 2022

The Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee met in the Royal Sonesta Dupont Circle, 2121 P Street Northwest, Washington, D.C., at 9:30 a.m., Megan Davis, Chair, presiding.

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Members Present:

Megan Davis, Ph.D., Chair; Research Professor, Aquaculture, Florida Atlantic University, Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute

Janet Coit, Assistant Administrator, National Marine Fisheries Service (ex officio member)

Bob Beal, Executive Director, Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ex officio member)*

Hugh Cowperthwaite, Senior Program Director, Fisheries and Aquaculture at Coastal Enterprises, Inc.

David Donaldson, Executive Director, Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission (ex officio member)

Thomas "Tom" Fote, Retired, Recreational Fisherman*

Jennifer Hagen, Marine Policy Advisor Quileute Tribe/Marine Biologist*

Sara McDonald, Ph.D., Director of Conservation, South Carolina Aquarium

Meredith Moore, Director, Fish Conservation Program, Ocean Conservancy

Stefanie Moreland, Director of Government Relations and Seafood Sustainability, Trident Seafoods

Ryan Prewitt, Chef/Owner, Peche Restaurant*

Linda ODierno, Fish and Seafood Development Specialist

Kellie Ralston, Vice President for Conservation and Public Policy, Bonefish & Tarpon Trust

Jocelyn Runnebaum, Ph.D., Marine Scientist, The Nature Conservancy

Ervin "Joe" Schumacker, Marine Scientist, Quinault Department of Fisheries, Quinault Indian Nation

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Sarah Schumann, Fisherman; Owner/Principal Consultant, Shining Seas Fisheries Consulting, LLC

Patrick "Pat" Sullivan, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus, Department of Natural Resources, Cornell University

Clayward "Clay" Tam, Cooperative Fisheries Research Coordinator, Pacific Islands Fisheries Group

Barry Thom, Executive Director, Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (ex officio member)

Matthew Upton, General Counsel and Director of Catcher Vessel Operations, United States Seafood*

Brett Veerhusen, Principal, Ocean Strategies
Richard Yamada, Owner, Shelter Lodge

NOAA/NMFS Staff Participants Present:

Heidi Lovett, Acting Designated Federal Officer, NOAA Fisheries

Gabriela McMurthy, Fishery Policy Analyst, Office of Policy, NOAA Fisheries

Zach Penney, Ph.D., Senior Advisor, NOAA

Sam Rauch, Deputy Assistant Administrator of Regulatory Programs, NOAA Fisheries

Jenni Wallace, Director, Office of Policy, NOAA Fisheries*

Cisco Werner, Ph.D., Director, Scientific Programs and Chief Science Advisor, NOAA Fisheries

Chuck Weirich, Aquaculture Manager, NOAA Sea Grant*

Katie Denman Zanolowicz, Policy Analyst, Office of Policy, NOAA Fisheries

Also Present (NOAA/NMFS Staff and Visitors):

Laura Diederick, External Affairs Lead, Office of Communications, NOAA Fisheries*

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Christine Ford, Fisheries Management
Specialist, NOAA Fisheries*

Lindsey Kraatz, Senior Science Advisor, NOAA
Fisheries

Keith Rickett, Meeting Manager, HB &
Company, Inc.*

Brianna Shaughnessy, Aquaculture Literacy
Coordinator, NOAA Fisheries*

Sarah Shoffler, National Seafood Strategy
Coordinator, NOAA Fisheries

Spencer Showalter, Advisor to the NMFS
Assistant Administrator (Acting)

*participating via webinar

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Proceedings

(8:33 a.m.)

Subcommittee Work Time - Commerce

Ms. McMurthy: Good morning everyone. This is the working time for the Commerce Subcommittee, and -- sorry, are we starting? Okay, no pressure. Okay, so for today's meeting I put together a draft template that I shared with you all later yesterday evening, as well as the list of proposed actions that Linda had put together for the group.

Just a friendly reminder that that is just one of many tools available to you in order to complete this prioritization exercise. It's just something written that we can reference, but by any means, please add or edit anything that you see on that list. So, quick agenda for today, I'm going to demonstrate the draft template just to see if this is how we would like to organize our thoughts as we go through this process.

And then we can switch back to the list so that we can start talking about some of the actions and seeing which ones you all agree on to prioritize. If there's a little discussion, if there's anything missing, we'll switch our focus to the list. Linda, is there anything else that we should discuss first, before we jump into things?

Ms. ODierno: I think we can start. I was thinking that we should probably start with the international trade implications, since this is Stefanie's last in person meeting.

Ms. McMurthy: Okay. So, when you say the trade implications, are you referring to goal three?

Ms. ODierno: Goal three.

Ms. McMurthy: Okay. So, when we jump back into the list, we'll just jump straight into goal three. But if anyone has thoughts on goals one and two, I can take notes, but we'll just start at three and then kind of work our way through. Good?

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Ms. Moreland: I don't have this in my inbox.

Ms. ODierno: And I couldn't open it, so.

Ms. McMurthy: Google drive.

Ms. Zanowicz: Do you want me to send it around?

Ms. McMurthy: I can download it quickly, it might be easier as a Word doc. So, let us do this. Okay, so just buying about 30 seconds so it can transfer to your laptops through the magical internet. Yeah, so essentially in our last meeting we discussed kind of having an introductory and summary of the recommendations.

More so a narrative of explaining the National Seafood Strategy, how this group came about, maybe a little context of the group members, and the process of how you all arrived to the recommendations, and then we'll jump into the actual recommendation part. We discussed we were going to organize it by goals, but a topic of discussion, it could be an ongoing topic of discussion, organization moving forward.

So, how it stands now is that per goal there would be a narrative kind of laying out the issue, and then once you organized and prioritize potential topics or action items, that would also have a bit of narrative as well, as justification as to why you all wanted to recommend this particular area or topic. So, that is the general layout of the template.

But like I said, it's evolving, there was one suggestion whether or not having a national versus regional structure would be appropriate too. I think that once we go through the list and identify these topics it'll be easier to make that decision, but just have it in the back of your minds as we're working through the list. Did I buy enough time?

Dr. McDonald: Yes.

Ms. McMurthy: Sweet. Okay, so you all have the document there. If there is no immediate comments or questions, we can switch gears to the list that, thank you, Katie, for pulling up. Good to move forward? Sweet. Could

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you scroll down to goal three please? Yeah, just a bit. Okay, so focusing on goal three as both the domestic and global markets, the trade perspective that we heard about yesterday.

And excited a few people in the group, which is awesome to hear. I'll give you guys a couple of minutes to read through these actions, and then we can open up for discussion as to what jumps out at you. Any additions? Yes.

Mr. Cowperthwaite: Sorry, I'm just looking at what you emailed us, and what is up here are very different. This has a lot of work done on it.

Ms. McMurthy: Yeah, let's back up a little bit. So, the template that I just shared is where we're kind of capturing these ideas. So, this is the list that we're working on, and so this is a much more extensive list based on public comments and suggestions provided in public comment.

Ms. ODierno: Yeah, let me jump in there. What I had done was I looked at all the public comments on the aquaculture strategy, the seafood strategy, and the seafood export trade strategy, and also the work that was done by the seafood task force that was organized in 2020. So, I took those comments and just randomly wrote them under the goals that they supposedly applied to.

So, from this, we have to refine them. And if you look at, like under three, goal three of the seafood strategy, a lot of this information would go under the idea of we need to have more of a voice in international trade, and international trade for seafood, both export and import. And we need to have some mechanism to have that voice to the U.S. Trade Representative, also to ITA.

And right now seafood is an extremely confusing commodity, there are a lot of regulations, the regulations change in different countries, and we are not getting the attention that we need for both the export and also on monitoring the imports, and that's keeping us from being

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competitive. So, we need to come up with a strategy to have a louder voice.

So, that's kind of where I would like to start. Anybody with suggestions about how we approach that, having a voice with the U.S. Trade Representative? We're small fish in a big pond. Stefanie, I know you have some ideas.

Ms. Moreland: I do. We've had several trade association comment letters that are trying to address this particular issue. Right now U.S. seafood trade is split across three offices within USTR, and there's not a senior policy person that understands and owns the seafood portfolio. Seafood is part of the industrial goods chapter of negotiations, and people assume it's part of Ag, and we just fall through the cracks.

And so, there's no one at a negotiation table thinking about seafood when it's time for bilateral and multilateral negotiations. And so, that's a really fundamental structural problem. And we've suggested task forces, I think there's interagency coordination already committed in the export chapter that was referenced yesterday by Alexa for the national export strategy.

There's a recognition that additional coordination is needed interagency. There are opportunities within commerce, ITA, so I think it would be appropriate to call out something there. And then we do need more ownership within USTR. Some pieces of trade association, people who have put a lot of thought into this, multiple companies trying to address these issues, I've got some language from them.

With respect to USTR, restore fairness and reciprocity for international trade and seafood products, and there's one request that I think is particularly important, and that's to embed and improve seafood expertise in leadership at USTR to coordinate seafood trade objectives among USTR offices.

To coordinate USTR seafood trade programs with seafood efforts of other agencies, and provide a point of entry for seafood producers to more effectively engage with USTR.

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So, reading that, I think that's the high level need in order to bring together a voice for negotiation, bring together all the subject matter experts at USTR, and have a point of contact for interagency discussion at USTR.

I don't know whether in the national seafood strategy we can include a bullet that is directive to USTR.

Ms. ODierno: Any other suggestions?

Dr. McDonald: Dr. McDonald: Mine's more related to IUU.

Ms. ODierno: One other thought that I had was what are the feelings towards having a dedicated Office of Seafood Trade? Now, obviously Fisheries does a lot of work with trade, but it's largely marine mammal protection, endangered species, the stock kinds of issues, it's not directed towards trade itself, and I think that might be an easier lift.

And having that person be, or those people hopefully -- Heidi is volunteering to be one of those people to communicate with the U.S. Trade Representative and with ITA. Possibly with an established and formalized committee or council, which is kind of how they operate a lot of the ag programs. They have specific groups, advisory groups for different commodities.

Ms. McMurthy: Heidi, you want to jump in? I do have a comment too, so go ahead.

Ms. Lovett: So, I totally understand that idea, I just was going to suggest that maybe you all did not hear from the -- the person who was here with Alexa was the person who manages the SIMP program, but I'm totally forgetting the woman, there's a different woman who manages the new division of trade, and trade in something, I forgot the title.

And something Alexa said, I just want to remind you of. So, two things, I think that that's what they were hoping to do within the office by creating this new division called trade, and what is the full title?

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Ms. McMurthy: It's the Trade and Commerce Division.

Ms. Lovett: Okay. Whether they're there yet, that's where you might want to at least direct all these recommendations. I think the division is actually there, but if they have the right staff, I don't know, so that would be great for you to recommend what you think needs to be there. As Alexa noted, it's not easy to stand up new advisory committees, so you just need to think about that one.

I'm just letting you know that, because there is a limit, people don't realize this, but each agency is limited to the number of advisory committees they're allowed to have. We have to justify, every two years when the charter renewal happens, we have to justify the importance and significance of the committees we do have.

So, there might be some other ways, like as a task force under this committee, if you want to bring in other external voices, there's other ways of doing that. But setting up a new advisory committee may not get the legs that you hope it would get. Let me just put it that way.

Dr. McDonald: Thanks for that segue, Heidi, because I was just about to make a suggestion of creating a task force, especially for dealing with what Alexa talked about yesterday with the SIMP, IUU fishing, forced labor and human trafficking, and then we can bring in outside efforts.

Because I think that there are a lot of people outside of MAFAC who have been working on this issue for a while, and could contribute both from the industry side, ones that are involved in doing proper due diligence, and working throughout their supply chains. As well as non-profits, and people who have created IUU risk tools, seafood slavery risk tools, and social auditing.

So, I think that there's a whole pool of people with expertise that I think MAFAC could draw upon if we created a task force. But I didn't want to hijack your meeting overall on commerce just specifically to talk about SIMP, but I just wanted to make that suggestion.

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Ms. ODierno: Heidi, does it matter what you call this group, if you had what I just said was an advisory group, is there some other label you can put that under to slide under the requirements?

Ms. Lovett: Well, you can certainly suggest an advisory group, you could also say an advisory group that could be an independent advisory group, or a task force under an existing advisory group, you could keep it broad like that potentially. But I just know that I don't want your idea to be shut down because somebody is going to say we can't have another advisory group.

But people don't always think about the task force option, and that's why, for instance, the Columbia Basin Partnership was setup as a task force. There was people who started out hoping that that would be an independent advisory group, and it takes a lot of time, and will above NOAA to get an advisory group approved.

So, I just wanted to share that. But definitely I didn't mean to say you couldn't put the recommendation in, but you might have it be like we think there needs to be an advisory group, maybe there's several options for achieving it. I just wanted to make sure you -- it's just not easy getting new FACA committees stood up all the time. Unless it's in legislation, in that case the agency is required to set it up.

Ms. Moreland: I think the main point is that we want to improve knowledge and expertise, in particularly ensure there's an understanding of U.S. producers, and looking at reciprocal trade, removing trade barriers for U.S. producers, and those types of things. So, it's about the knowledge and expertise more than the structure of a committee in my view, and we might be able to focus on that.

Ms. ODierno: Good suggestion.

Ms. McMurthy: So, Sarah has a comment, but I'm going to jump in very quickly. So, it sounds like we did get an overview of the trade and commerce division yesterday, but maybe it's worth meeting with the division chief in

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one of our upcoming meetings, or possibly extending it to get a better understanding of their mission, their vision, how they're building out that program.

And that might clarify some opportunities for establishing a task force, what kind of expertise are they already seeking in different avenues, whether it's interagency, or external, just to get a better understanding. And then the recommendations of possible gaps. Sarah, and then Tom.

Ms. Shoffler: Hi, one other way that might help to get at what you're seeking, which is to increase knowledge and expertise of seafood in USTR is maybe someone from IATC, and the division that Gabby was just talking about doing a detail in USTR.

Ms. McMurthy: Tom?

Mr. Fote:FOTE: Yeah, I'm jumping in the middle of that topic, but that's not really what I was going to ask a question about. I wasn't able to attend yesterday's meeting, but when I look at the list you put up there, I see shrimp and the chemicals involved that could be traced to shrimp and influence.

And I've been concerned about that, as you know, Linda, for a long time I've made sure that fish advisory went out to all the species in New Jersey that we basically should be aware of. And when I look at shrimp being imported from Vietnam, all I can think about as a Vietnam vet, and an Agent Orange vet, I think of all the dioxin we sprayed on those rice paddies and every place else, that they're using probably to raise these shrimp, and scallops.

Are we testing for dioxin in any of those imports? And I know it's slightly off of what you were discussing, but that's where I come from on this. Always worrying about that we're allowing -- we're very strict about how we basically do agriculture in the United States, but other countries are not, and how are we testing that food that comes in?

Ms. Moreland: I think that that's an important consideration, and that's one of the things that makes us

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less competitive, is that we do not hold our imports to the same standards that we do for domestic production, and that's kind of the crux of one of the issues we have to look at, and that's a good point.

And that import is over so many different agencies that it becomes very confusing, and that's why we need a point person, or several point people. And I think we need point people who are in this for the longer term so that they can really become familiar with the issues and move forward. Clay, you had a comment?

Mr. Tam: Yeah, just a comment. At least in the Western Pacific, we do import a lot. But also what comes to mind has been the tuna allocation where we're at. And lo and behold, for the U.S. for the longest time, it's only been six percent of the bigeye catch in the entire Pacific, that's not much.

When you look at Japan, China, and the other countries that fish in the waters, Taiwan, they've got a big, big chunk of that share. And the number of times where you try to approach the governing bodies to increase that, and it takes time, and it's a lot of politics in terms of national stuff. And I think when it comes to trade that allocation issue is really important, they go hand in hand.

And I think that again, when my reference to frozen tuna is coming in from Taiwan and Vietnam, you can see the leverage there. And recently within the last year or two China has taken a huge foothold in the Pacific Islands that once supported the U.S. purse seine fleet and others were kicked out.

China came in and bought out the quota, and so they don't participate now in U.S. stuff. And in fact to the point where the U.S., I think it was a Coast Guard ship that was out there, they didn't allow them to come in even to refuel in that part. So, there's this huge leveraging now in the Pacific, and it might be -- what we hear, it's on the interior side in terms of negotiating allocation.

So, it gets a little bit dicey there, but I think that that's important to look at too. Thank you.

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Ms. Moreland: I think that goes to the theme that we're experiencing on tariff and non-tariff trade barriers, and the more onerous regulatory environment in the U.S. relative to what we compete against. That when we think about international and seafood, other U.S. priorities are taking precedent over thinking about U.S. harvesters and U.S. producers.

We're getting negotiated around with topics that have nothing to do with fisheries management or seafood as a priority. And so, I think that's exactly what we're seeking, is more of a whole of government approach to be mindful of the U.S. supply chain, and of our conservation objectives and fisheries when the U.S. negotiators are at any table.

So, in terms of actions, would you prefer to focus on a directive around a whole of government approach, encouraging an interagency task force, formalizing more processes across government, or we could make a recommendation to leverage and build expertise within the office whose name no one can remember.

Ms. McMurthy: The international folks? Yeah, the International Affairs Trade and Commerce, those folks in the trade and commerce division.

Ms. Moreland: Which interacts with ITA how, do we understand that?

Ms. McMurthy: Yeah, so they are pretty recently established, so that would definitely be a question that we could ask them directly. There are existing relationships, but I don't quite know. Heidi?

Ms. Lovett: Yeah, I was just going to say that I know there's existing relationships. I just don't understand that myself either, so we would definitely need to bring expertise from the office in.

Ms. McMurthy: Flags, hands, suggestions?

Ms. Moreland: So, I think you are hearing from me that need for coordinated and understanding of rules to elevate policy into the right form, and then to have those

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people be mindful of U.S. interest in seafood. And I think there's a lot of different ways we could go. And so, I'd be happy to participate in a follow up if we want to do that with Alexa's team in order to figure out structurally where to direct that so this doesn't get lost.

Dr. Sullivan: Okay, I think we have a general idea of what direction we want to go in. It's a question then of getting Alexa's team to give us some advice on the best way to accomplish this. And I know that one of the proposals has been to have an office of seafood in USDA as opposed to in commerce.

And has to be decided, does commerce want to really have control over the trade issues, and the domestic marketing kinds of issues? And from what Alexa said the other day, it seems that they are interested.

Ms. McMurthy: Yeah, so related to USDA, kind of putting on the subcommittee on aquaculture hat, there are colleagues there that do touch on international trade issues. We are allowed to have guests from other -- okay, cool. So, more than happy to reach out, so USDA APHIS comes to mind as the folks that handle trade, but I'm sure there's -- the Foreign Ag Service is another one.

Yeah, so I guess maybe understanding how they coordinate could be a potential opportunity to inform the recommendations. So, I can reach out to that aquaculture group, and try to see more broadly in seafood. We don't want to just focus it, we want to get a larger picture here.

But that's another option to maybe -- and while we're throwing in recommendations, reach out to IATC, USTR, maybe get more of an informational understanding of their structures too, that may be helpful.

Ms. ODierno: USDA has a permanent chief negotiator at USTR, and under that they have specific commodity groups, and they have advisory committees for those commodity groups, that's the structure they use to get their trade policies in place, and they --

Ms. Moreland: It's very effective.

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Ms. ODierno: Yes, it is.

Ms. McMurthy: Okay.

Ms. Lovett: And there's not one for seafood, or there -- I'm curious is seafood --

Ms. ODierno: There is not one for seafood, and that's why we're kind of the stepchild for everybody, and nobody acknowledges us.

Ms. Lovett: That's what I was wondering, what are we lumped with?

Ms. Moreland: Blue jeans, and bourbon, we're an industrial good.

Ms. Lovett: So it's not even in addition to other proteins, food.

Ms. Moreland: Not at all, nothing to do with food.

Ms. Lovett: Interesting. Thanks for clarifying that, you guys do know that more than we do, so thanks.

Ms. ODierno: So, there are a lot of shortfalls out there.

Ms. Lovett: As I'm hearing what you're saying is so if USTR, if USTR is not doing it, what you're suggesting, what I'm hearing is that NOAA should be doing that, having that kind of role, or leading that kind of a group since USTR is not.

Ms. ODierno: I think what we were thinking about should be NOAA should be advising USTR and ITA when there are issues. Because it is a confusing commodity, and you need that kind of expertise, and someone who understands the trade issues. And that was the idea behind having some group of stakeholders who could provide input.

Ms. Moreland: That's the crux of it, because of the complexity and current government structure, we've been wondering whether we have to go to USDA, but the most appropriate thing would be for NOAA to continue to

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build this depth and expertise. And I think it's in Alexa's office, and then we need a chief negotiator for seafood identified in USTR.

Right now we have subject matter experts across three line offices in USTR, but not a chief negotiator that has seafood for their portfolio, and so I think that's where we'd start as a recommendation. Is expertise and knowledge of U.S. seafood interests in NOAA, and then continue to advance for a chief negotiator in USTR.

Ms. Lovett: So, from your expertise, and just I'm going to ask a question, because I know that -- I shouldn't say I know, but I think I know is what I'm hearing -- let me just put it that way. What I'm hearing is teasing this out, making sure that seafood as a commodity is getting the attention that it deserves compared to other commodities, and not necessarily getting it all confused and wrapped up in the other side of trade issues which relates to RFMOs, and IUU.

I mean it's connected, but it feels like because then we are also dealing with the state department, which I think leads those negotiations more. So, I'm trying to clarify for my own knowledge, but I think -- are you trying to make sure it's a little bit teased out, if that makes sense, or is there something else you're looking for?

Ms. Moreland: One of the offices in USTR that touches us is the Office in Environment and Natural Resources I think it is, that would be involved on behalf of U.S. government on those negotiations.

Ms. Lovett: And state department, yeah.

Ms. Moreland: Sure, along with, but there is an environmental element, and an IU element within USTR as well. So, we want it to be all encompassing across the three USTR branches, which is small business, market access, industrial competitiveness. Then ag affairs and commodity policy, and the environment and natural resource team.

Ms. Lovett: Cool, okay, thanks for clarifying.

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Mr. Veerhusen: A question, apologies, I had a meeting run late this morning. If I am remembering correctly, there are two pieces of legislation, and if this was already discussed, that have been brought forward, the National Seafood Supply Act, which establishes an Office of Seafood Policy program integration in USDA.

And then the, was it the SHELLS Act would create a program office for aquaculture within USDA. So, I just want to bring those forward as active conversations on the Hill, and we should just be mindful of whatever work we do needs to fit within the confines of MAFAC and active legislation too, and they can support it, just they can run parallel to each other.

Ms. McMurthy: Thanks, Brett. So, side note on the Google Drive, I put together a folder for relevant materials, and maybe a copy of that draft bill would be helpful to upload for you all to reference.

Ms. ODierno: Do we agree that we have a potential strategy here of setting up a meeting with Alexa's folks who are going to be in the trade office to get some more insights in how best to go about this process? Are we all in agreement on that, or?

Mr. Veerhusen: I would also, I mean maybe it's, I think first would be meeting with the agency to better understand, I think very closely would be if we can talk with anybody at USDA, just to understand what their role is.

Ms. McMurthy: Yeah, so running lists on my mind, and I will type it, but let's kind of put it in order here. So, first and foremost let's talk to trade and commerce division, get an understanding of how they're structured, and how they're going to be structured, it is an evolving process. Reaching out to the USDA seafood folks, and kind of understanding how they're handling trade a little better, just for context again.

Trying to find some contacts at ITA and USTR as well, and kind of setup an informational session like that as well. If you have contact, I'm going to look through my contacts,

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I have to admit it is through aquaculture, and Alexa's team probably already has it, so I'm not going to put that much effort, I'll just ask her.

So, those four federal agencies come to mind, well slash departments. But if there are any others that should be included in that informational session list, let's call it, please let me know.

Ms. ODierno: I think that if you look at USDA, primarily what they do is they do a lot of export trade activities, real commercial kind of activities, support people at trade shows, support people for promotional materials, those kinds of marketing activities, and I think that's pretty much where their limits are at this point, they don't have policy issues.

But I did reach out to some of those folks that I know, and they had issues, and some of those issues are reflected here in the list, and they don't have any way to solve them at this point. So, it would be important to have a vehicle to do that. So, I think starting kind of more internally with the commerce folks, USTR and ITA, would be really helpful.

So, we have a strategy to move ahead with that, and a lot of the things that we had under that goal three would fall into that basket. Things like the tariff structures, I think. Tariff structures, providing seafood expertise, Alaskan flatfish exclusions, those kinds of things would fall into that basket.

So, the other trade issues, and Alexa mentioned this the other day, is there is a need for a standardized electronic export certificate with a price structure, because one of the things I've heard is they get all different price structures when they go to get export certificates. And I think all that has to be standardized to make it easier for industry to export products. I don't know if anybody else has heard issued along those lines.

Ms. Moreland: Does that mean per unit, what kind of unit, standardizing the value per unit?

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Ms. ODierno: Standardizing.

Ms. Moreland: So, there is that whole area Sarah already brought up, SIMP, and the amount of thought, and expertise that's going to have to flow into that. If export certificates are being reviewed, that can trigger retaliatory actions from export markets if something is required that's more onerous than what they have, and so that can have a huge effect on U.S. producers.

So, I think again, that expertise needs to be depend to support market access, and to prevent retaliatory action, or mitigate the concern about retaliatory action. And I think there's another category because of the amount of agencies now that are interested in tracing things, that there's got to be data sharing and some standardization across that.

So, you have the rule that Brett mentioned yesterday about FDA FSMA requiring seafood traceability for all imports starting in 2026. We already have SIMP data, I learned from Customs and Border Protection who houses that data that they can't look at it. So, for example there's a sanction on the entry of red king crab coming direct from Russia.

We know there's a lot of Russian king crab in the market, and when we talked about enforcement on that, CBP basically said they can't look at it, even though that's perfect and complete trace information back to vessel. And so, on all these export monitoring and documentation issues, something is going to have to get rationalized.

It's a big stream of work, and I think very relevant to this topic in terms of the effect on business.

Dr. McDonald: I agree, and I can't help but keep thinking, and I know this is probably a really bad way to think about it. But before there was a Department of Homeland Security there were all these different agencies that didn't speak to each other, and then 9/11 happened, and we created the Department of Homeland Security, and now they have a systematic way to communicate with each other.

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And for some reason that analogy keeps coming to mind. Like there's all these agencies that aren't speaking to each other that have different ways of collecting data, that have different access, I didn't know CBP didn't have access to those data, that's insane. And so, I don't know what the solution is, because obviously we're not going to create a whole new federal agency for this.

But I just feel like there needs to be some sort of infrastructure solution to this, because there are a lot of cooks in this kitchen, and there's no head chef. And so, it's just a lot that's happening. So, like I said, this is more just like my stream of consciousness thoughts, but that's sort of where my mind is right now.

Ms. Moreland: I think this is another topic for Alexa to shop, and it's a big one.

Ms. McMurthy: All right, so great conversation, great suggestions. Brett?

Mr. Veerhusen: Just one thing, I can't help but think that we should just be mindful of the subcommittee's work alongside the strategy and budget committee, and kind of elevating NOAA's value proposition to the nation. Anything that we're going to be asking to do, we should be coming to the table with clear messaging and talking points about the value of the agency, the value of the science and data that we're collecting, and the value of seafood across the board.

Ms. Moreland: Seafood inspection program must be paid for by industry, it is getting incredibly expensive, and Congress directed for it to be funded by industry, and so we are paying extraordinary fees for audits, and it's affecting the value proposition in our supply chains. And so, while that would be nice, currently any additional regulatory step they're taking, they then bill us for.

For the phone calls, for the travel, for going to an ATM machine, all of it, and weekends are time and a half.

Mr. Veerhusen: Yeah, so we should make sure that it's efficient, and those costs get passed down all the way I

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am sure, to the end user and the harvester. So, let's make sure that that is not the case as much.

Ms. Zanowicz: Hi everyone, sorry to interrupt, important announcement. If you are looking for the Rec Fish Subcommittee meeting, that is happening at 9:15 in the room next door, in case you want to make a quiet exit, this is the time.

Ms. McMurthy: Thank you, Katie. Go ahead, Linda.

Ms. ODierno: I was going to switch to a different topic, I think we have to wait with the export issues until we get some more feedback from the other offices. But the other suggestion is the domestic market, how are we going to grow the domestic market? And I know there is interest in a seafood council. One of the ideas I wanted to throw out is the possibility of having an overall seafood council.

Now, these have not worked in the past. So, we've got to kind of think about why they didn't work, and how we can structure them so they might work. And one of the thoughts that's been brought up is the idea of having regional groups. There used to be regional fisheries development foundations around the country.

They were funded largely by NOAA through SK money, which is the tariffs. And there was a New England, mid Atlantic, Gulf and South Atlantic, west coast, and Alaska. The only one that still exists is Alaska, and those groups deal with regional issues. And because the country is so big, and we have so many different issues, perhaps the regional aspect would be a direction to go in. So, comments and thoughts about this proposed seafood council?

Mr. Schumacker: You can call me Richard.

Ms. ODierno: Okay, you got squid problems?

Mr. Schumacker: Just, you and I have discussed this, Linda, a little bit, and as we all know --

Ms. McMurthy: Joe, can you microphone?

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Mr. Schumacker: Thank you very much. Linda and I have discussed this a little bit prior, and as we all agree, seafood is a multi-headed beast, many, many products involved here, obviously. And with many, many distinctions, and so regional seemed like the way to go. At least if you're going to try to go forward with a workable seafood council that could really start to begin to develop domestic markets.

Splitting this out regionally of course is the issue, right? How many, what can we do, what can possibly be afforded, and all of those things, and what could be practical? So, I'm willing to put a couple of thoughts out there basically, northwest, because my home, but I think it's a serious area that has huge salmon production and a lot of other products in that area.

The west coast, central southwest, Gulf, southern and northern Atlantic, or you could go with the council divisions there, with northern, mid, and southern Atlantic, but at least that tries to get to some of the distinct areas and the distinct products that are being produced in those areas.

The overall council too is a main thing, it has to have a center to this beast, if you will, so the body for the legs.

Ms. McMurthy: Thanks, Joe. Megan?

Chair Davis: Okay, I was just --

Ms. McMurthy: Sorry, Ryan.

Mr. Prewitt: Hi there, can you all hear me okay? So, what would be the overall goal of the regional councils? Would the idea be that they market nationally the seafood that is harvested in the respected areas, or that they market to a more sort of localized group. In other words the Gulf would market to the Gulf States, or would it be that they market nationally?

Mr. Schumacker: Ryan, this is Joe, my answer to that would be yes, nationally. I mean, that's the idea here, a domestic market for regional products within the U.S.

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Ms. ODierno: I think they could also look at regional issues, like the problem with the sablefish, you can't find a market for it, a regional group could then try to identify potential markets. The squid products from Alaska, trying to identify a market for that, how to promote the product in that market. So, I think that that might be one aspect.

And one of the things that Brett and I had discussed is the idea of possibly bringing in some of the supermarket folks, some of the supermarket seafood managers, and ask them directly what can we do to be more competitive with the imports, what can we do to help them sell more fish? And the same for the food service sector.

What can we do to make that an easier sell? So, those were some thoughts, and I think perhaps we should think about bringing those folks in and having a conversation.

Mr. Veerhusen: Yeah I -- did somebody else have their hand up?

Ms. McMurthy: Tom does, and Megan.

Mr. Fote: Yeah, I'm just wondering how do I get into the rec meeting. I sit on the rec committee, and I can't get in.

Ms. McMurthy: Sorry, Tom.

Ms. Zanowicz: Hi, Tom, I'll send you a message and get you connected, sorry about that.

Ms. McMurthy: Megan?

Chair Davis: Sorry, I just took a bite. A couple of things, I want you all to remember that we spent almost two years building the national seafood council document. Please refer to that, please don't reinvent that, there was a lot, a lot of work that went into that. That has since moved onto the Seafood Nutrition Partnership, they have formed an incredible task force.

And they have been to Congress two years in a row asking for funding at the level that we put into the report. So, I just want to remind everybody, and many of you were on

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that task, and so if we're going to be working on something in that regard, we want to see what new angle, or be able to leverage the work that we already did, and that went to the secretary of commerce as well.

But it's got a lot of momentum, I think if anything I would invite Linda Cornish to come and speak with you all. I am now sitting on their advisory council, and so I'm pretty close to seeing how they're taking our work from MAFAC to the next level. And I know that they're not just concentrating on domestic, because they've got a lot of funders that are coming in that are also international.

So, we still have quote the issue of how to enhance domestic products. So, that's still an area that still needs a lot of work, but I just wanted to mention that, thanks.

Ms. McMurthy: Thanks Megan, Brett, you had something?

Mr. Veerhusen: Same comment as Megan.

Ms. McMurthy: Sweet, great minds. Joe?

Mr. Schumacker: Yeah, just -- and that's really good to hear, who is the Seafood Nutrition Partnership? Because honestly, since we worked on this, and I helped with that as well, I was worried that this thing was languishing, and this is really good news. What's been going on?

Chair Davis: It's got a lot of legs, it's amazing. If you go to the Seafood Nutrition Partnership website, you will see the task group that they put together. You will see also progress on what they've made, and how they're going - - I can't remember exact timing of when they've gone to Congress. But I know that they've asked for a request last year, and they've asked for a request this year at the 25 million that we suggested to make this happen.

And remember, they wanted to look at the same model as what USDA marketing services are doing, the avocado --

Dr. McDonald: Popcorn.

Chair Davis: Popcorn is now on there? Or maybe it was

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always on there. But anyway, they have momentum, I think it's good to continue to discuss with Linda. Linda, remember, Seafood Nutrition Partnership is all about the health of why to eat seafood, they don't distinguish between domestic and international.

So, their thing is, and their advisory council is made up of nutritionists, and those that work on omega-3s, and other nutritional sides. So, it's very interesting.

Ms. McMurthy: Thanks, Megan, and I can share some links in a follow up email. Stefanie, and then Sarah.

Ms. Moreland: Yeah, on this issue I've been quiet because there is quite a debate on this topic. I totally agree with Megan, use the work that was done by this committee, I think it's excellent work. It is the basis for what Seafood Nutrition Partnership is taking, but they are not differentiating domestic.

And so, due to that there's another piece of legislation that passed, establishing the American Fisheries Advisory committee, and that group is seeking to get more SK funds to be able to distribute them on a regional basis towards the old model on the characterization, Linda, that you led off with, in terms of the regional opportunity.

And so in addition to looking at where the funding request sits for the all of seafood marketing, I think tracking where AFAC is at on trying to secure additional SK grants for distribution to regional marketing is important to track. Thanks.

Mr. Veerhusen: I'll add that recently I was at the FMI, the food industry association's annual meeting in Boise, which is comprised of all the seafood category managers, the largest grocers in the country, as well as seafood distributors, Stefanie is on that as well. I will just say that from what I heard, I'm just a little kind of advisor member invited to the table, so I have very little sway.

But they are looking for sort of I would capture it as they're looking for something to sink their teeth into. I think they feel like they have gotten a better direction on

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sustainability and sourcing sustainability, and sort of the next thing is they're asking themselves what to do.

And the biggest issue right now is price, and demand, and the category itself really being negatively impacted with sales on the consumer. So, that would be a group that I think would potentially be willing to talk. I think that would be sort of step two after we've gotten a little bit of direction. CPAC as well is a group of ten seafood distributors, and I think they would be a secondary group.

And then of course the different restaurant associations. National Restaurant Association, any state level restaurant associations, and I know that there is independent restaurant coalitions as well. And we should make sure that we involve, or try to involve different layers of the seafood supply chain without duplicating the work of Seafood Nutrition Partnership.

Ms. McMurthy: Thanks, Brett. Sarah?

Ms. Shoffler: Yeah, thanks for bringing up, Megan, that MAFAC report. If there are things in there that you could pull that are specifically within NOAA Fisheries' lane, that would be great. I wanted to mention that with the FY '23 budget, there was direction for us to provide a report detailing how the agency would facilitate a national seafood council through the fisheries promotion fund.

And that report is working its way to Congress, so it'll be available at some point. All to say that there is apparently interest in Congress to make something happen, whether it's through Seafood Nutrition Partnership or otherwise, who knows. And then also in terms of this marketing, again, if there are recommendations that are within our lane, that would be really helpful here.

So, I'm thinking about the types of communications that we can do, and the type of research that we can do, and I mean maybe look at agricultural marketing services for examples even of what might be done. And again, if there are marketing analyses, or if you're interested in marketing analyses, that would be of interest to NOAA as well.

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Ms. McMurthy: Thanks, Sarah. Quickly, Stefanie, before you have your comment, we are at the like five second mark. So, we are at 9:30, time flies when you're having fun, so I apologize. Stefanie, I still want you to say your comment after, but I do want to let you all know that it is 9:30, so we're going to be transitioning back into the full MAFAC meeting, okay?

Ms. Moreland: Totally support the comment that Sarah just made with respect to what the agency can do, and don't want to lose the opportunity of those direct recommendations and communications about good practice, about what makes U.S. fisheries management something that consumers should look to as preferred, and customers should look to as preferred is really important and a great opportunity.

Ms. McMurthy: Thanks, Stefanie. With that, we will follow via email because we have run out of time. But I have my to-do list, again, I will put in the email. Our next meeting is in two weeks, I guess two weeks Thursday, I'm blanking on the time, I apologize, but that will also be in the email. Thank you all for the discussion.

Ms. ODierno: And I will try to put together a more coherent document that can go around for people to look at, comment on, and throw out, whatever.

Ms. McMurthy: Thanks, Linda.

Ms. ODierno: Thank you all very much.

Chair Davis: Thank you, Linda, for leading this effort.

(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went off the record at 9:31 a.m. and resumed at 9:40 a.m.)

Opening Remarks

Chair Davis: Good morning, everyone. So, we have a half a day agenda with quite a lot packed in, which is great. And Heidi reviewed yesterday what we're going to do, but we do have Chuck Weirich on standby to give us the National Sea Grant Seafood Industry Workforce Development Project's overview. We will have Zach

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Penney coming to tribal engagement update.

We have two draft recommendations that we'll be voting on. And then we'll have a review of action items, next meetings, and things like that. So, unless Heidi has some other, Heidi or Katie has some other comments, I think we can probably get started. Okay so, Chuck, thank you for joining us this morning, and providing us an update. So, we're going to turn it over to you now.

NOAA National Sea Grant FY 23 Seafood Industry Workforce Development Projects

Dr. Weirich: Thanks, Megan, and thanks for the invite today to present an overview, basically of what we at the National Sea Grant Office funded towards workforce development projects involving fisheries and aquaculture this last previous fiscal year. So, if we can pull up the presentation, or?

Ms. Zanowicz: Just give us one sec, we're working on it, Chuck.

Dr. Weirich: Yeah, no worries. Let me know if I need to share, I can try that.

Ms. Zanowicz: All right, so the presentation is up, you should be able to see it on your screen as well, just let us know when you want us to go to the next slide.

Dr. Weirich: Yeah, for some reason I can't see it on my screen.

Ms. Zanowicz: All right, we're working on it, sorry about that.

Dr. Weirich: Yeah, that's fine, I can view it in another window, and just -- there it goes.

Ms. Zanowicz: Okay, thank you.

Dr. Weirich: Yeah, thanks again. Again, this will be just an overview of the fiscal year '23 Seafood Industry Workforce Development Projects that were developed. Joshua Brown had a heavy hand in the Young Fisherman's

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Development Act projects. Mark Rath and I, as aquaculture managers, we basically oversaw the Aquaculture Workforce Development Project, so next slide please.

Just for an overview of this collectively of the two competitions, we funded ten projects. And they range bolstering workforce development efforts in both wild caught and aquaculture sectors of the seafood industry. Our total investment for both of these competitions was 3.3 million. These projects, they started this last summer and fall, this fall, and they're two years in duration.

So, as far as -- and I'll go over all the projects in a little bit of detail with the time I have starting with the Young Fisherman's Career Development Project. It's a competition, there were three projects selected that were based in Alaska, North Carolina, and Massachusetts.

14 proposals were received out of this competition, the investment here was almost a million dollars. Regarding the Aquaculture Workforce Development Support Project Competition, there's seven projects selected from different sea grant programs in California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Massachusetts, New Jersey, South Carolina, and Washington.

There were 12 proposals received here, the investment was 2.4 million. So, this whole development with supporting workforce development regarding aquaculture and fisheries, that's a high priority of the National Sea Grant Office, as well as MAFAC of course. So, we do have the support of our administration leadership. Next slide please.

So, as far as the Young Fisherman Career Development Projects, I'll go over these in detail, there's a slide for each of these. So, the first one is Alaska, entitled Alaska Onboard, a young fisherman training an apprenticeship program. The second one is From the Dock to the Deck to the Wheelhouse, developing skilled fishermen in New England through early career stages.

And the next one is Next Generation Seafood Industry

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implementing career development programming in the southeast region through public and private partnerships. Next slide please. So, as far as the Alaska project, the Alaska Onboard Project, again, it was awarded to Alaska Sea Grant. This project will combine expertise and training methods and programs.

It will be led by Alaska Sea Grant. Other organizations such as the Alaska Longline Fisherman's Association, and the Association of Alaskan Marine Conservation Council, Alaskan Marine Safety Education Association as well. So, the goal here is to provide regional training and mentorship opportunities for commercial fishers getting into the industry.

So, this project does involve applied skills training, apprenticeships, and networking opportunities. So, next slide please. The next project based out of Massachusetts, it was with the PI here is with the Fishing Partnership Health Plan Corporation. This project will allow young fishermen in New England to receive vocational training as they enter the industry.

Basically developing them into competent deck hands, and transitioning them to the wheelhouse as captains. So, this program involves expansion of training programs in several New England states, including Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and New Hampshire, and actively involves the commercial fishing industry.

Next slide please. This project, the Next Generation Seafood Industry in the southeast region was awarded to North Carolina Sea Grant. This project will allow for implementation of near term action items from the south Atlantic planning framework developed by Sea Grant programs in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia.

And these will be focusing on safety skills, liability, financial literacy, business management, and marketing. And this program will involve promoting training activities to represent underrepresented groups in the seafood industry as well. So, that's it for the young fisherman's development projects.

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Next slide please. We'll now talk about the Aquaculture Workforce Development Project. So, seven projects funded, again we were happy to fund these projects, they represent a variety of different regions across the U.S. Next slide please. So, the first one here is focused on southern California, and basically it's designing and launching a community college aquaculture workforce development program.

California Sea Grant was awarded this out of the competition, and it focuses on a community college near San Diego, it's specifically MiraCosta College, a technology career institute, that's where the activities will be focused, in Carlsbad, California. And so, basically this project will design an aquaculture workforce development certificate program at MiraCosta, which by the way is an HCI institution.

The credits here will be transferrable to an associate's degree, in preparation basically for an aquaculture industry that's anticipated to develop in that region. Next slide please. The next one is in Connecticut basically, awarded to Connecticut Sea Grant. So, basically it's a Connecticut aquaculture workforce development strategy.

So, it's focused on preparing the next generation of aquaculturists in Connecticut basically, to start out with Connecticut, to establish more transparent, comprehensive, and accessible pathways for post-secondary aquaculture education, and growing education and training in the state of Connecticut.

And this project will involve performing a needs assessment for aquaculture workforce development in Connecticut, as well as outreach and education. Next slide please. The next one is focused on Hawaii and the Pacific, and this was awarded to Hawaii Sea Grant. This particular project enhancing workforce development based on aquaculture in Hawaii and the Pacific.

This project will involve participation of the industry, and will increase participation and support for development of a diverse aquaculture workforce development program

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with many opportunities not just in Hawaii, but also in American Samoa and Guam. This project will focus on developing aquaculture internship programs implemented for students and community members in several locations, academic institutions, aquaculture businesses, and non-profit organizations.

Next slide please. So, this one's focused on Massachusetts, awarded to MIT Sea Grant, extending and integrating aquaculture workforce development in Massachusetts communities. So, it will involve MIT Sea Grant as well as Woods Hole Sea Grant, and Barnstable County Cooperative Extension on the cape. They will develop an aquaculture internship program that brings diverse recruits to that program between different communities.

And help to integrate cooperation and collaboration in between those communities. This program will involve a training phase consisting of online and in person training activities. And this will be followed by hands on experience working with shellfish, farms, or related businesses.

Next slide please. This next project is focused on New Jersey, establishing an apprenticeship program in shellfish aquaculture awarded to New Jersey Sea Grant. This will focus on high school students, to introduce high school students to aquaculture as a career choice, to help support the growing aquaculture industry in New Jersey.

And this specifically will consist of a week-long shellfish aquaculture boot camp providing opportunities for these high school students to gain hands on experience at aquaculture operations, and also will include placement of these students for an eight week internship program at local shellfish farms.

Next slide please. This next one is sort of a hybrid program here, between commercial fisheries and aquaculture. It's based in McClellanville, South Carolina, and specifically awarded to South Carolina Sea Grant. So, this builds off of two previously funded Food from the Sea Grant Careers projects. There are plans in place for

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expanding a pilot program, the pilot training program.

And again this is a hybrid program that's getting underway down there in McClellanville. Next slide please. And the final project here will be based in Washington State, it's awarded to Washington Sea Grant, shellfish crew and manager training. This project will revive a previously successful training program by updating it to reflect current industry needs.

And adding a manager training component to the program to equip employers with the necessary tools for recruiting and training a next generation workforce. As part of this project, the effectiveness of both the manager training program along with the crew training program, both programs will be evaluated for their effectiveness in terms of employee recruitment and retention.

Next slide please. And so, I wanted to present here, Mark and I, along with our administration leadership at the national office recently came up with a -- it wasn't all of a sudden, it was a nine month work effort to develop a predictable funding plan for the National Sea Grant Office focused on aquaculture.

So, we have a plan in place for the next five fiscal years, starting with this fiscal year, fiscal year '24, to offer recurring opportunities that are predictable to allow folks that are applying to know this is coming, and this is basically modeled off the SKA program, that it's in place, you know it's coming, you can plan ahead, you can collaborate and develop partners.

And I wanted to bring this up because there is definite room here that workforce development efforts have a place in. So, with the remaining time I have here, I can briefly go over it. We will be announcing three NOFOs here relatively soon. One of them is a national aquaculture initiative that will focus on aquaculture production.

So, it will focus on a number of species, pretty much all species that are either commercially in place, or have high potential for commercialization. It will involve biology,

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such as physiology, disease management, nutrition, genetics, as well as production systems and production methods. So, in even years, starting with this year, we also have the aquaculture supplemental, which is Sea Grant program based.

It's not a competition, it's basically a funding program that awards or invests based on the aquaculture related projects that are funded through the state, or the Sea Grant Program omnibus competitions, so the biennial competitions. So, we're in the process of getting the eligibility amounts out to the programs at this point.

One of the things that's related to workforce development is both the aquaculture technology grants, technology and education travel grants, which we initiated last year. This is going to be a recurring annual competition to Sea Grant programs, and it involves basically exposing folks to different aquaculture programs and facilities domestically as well as internationally.

For example, two of the projects funded last year, actually three of them have international components. One of them is going to the U.K. to learn more about microalgae culture, one of them is going to France to learn more about scallop processing and marketing, and one of them is going to Indonesia basically, it's an interactive program between Great Lakes Sea Grant programs and Indonesia aquaculture.

And then we'll have some miscellaneous funds hopefully at the end to address opportunities as needed. And odd years we'll have the national aquaculture initiative focused on business support, and this is going to be all encompassing ranging from economics, markets, business planning, education and aquaculture literacy, as well as workforce development, there will definitely be a place for that topic.

Aquaculture collaboratives or hubs, this is based on the competition that was first started in 2019, and established 11 aquaculture hubs. Some of them, as mentioned to the panel before in our previous meetings, focus on workforce development. These hubs have been

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extended two years, they will expire this next fiscal year, next August.

But we will have opportunities for these topics to be carried forward basically through competitions every other year, every odd year. We hope to establish three to five aquaculture collaboratives. Again, the education and technology travel grants, we'll have those every year, and the aquaculture internships program, I failed to mention, I believe will hopefully start this fiscal year.

We're in the development, this is going to be three Sea Grant programs, but we hope to establish this as an annual effort to sustain these programs, and that'll definitely be focused on workforce development. And then on the odd years we'll also have a competition to address legal issues within the Sea Grant network involving aquaculture.

So, I know that's kind of crammed in there pretty fast with the limited time I have here, but that's just a general overview. And we hope to, as far as work force development going forward, we'll definitely keep our eyes on the prize regarding what's been developed through MAFAC, through the efforts that are the direction towards work force development efforts.

So, with that, if there is any questions, and if you want more details on these projects, please email myself or Mark, and we'll get back to y'all with the details. And again, these projects are just starting up, all of the ten projects I overviewed. They had start dates ranging from last July to last month in October, so they're just getting kicked off.

Chair Davis: Thank you, Chuck. It's exciting to see the progress that you all are making, and that the grants are out there doing the work that was proposed, so that's a very exciting update, really appreciate that, and hope that you can keep coming back to MAFAC meetings and giving updates like this, really exciting.

Dr. Weirich: Absolutely, again, I appreciate the hospitality, and invite to provide this overview.

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Chair Davis: Yes, absolutely. So, we have two questions, one from Joe, and one from Brett.

Dr. Weirich: Okay.

Mr. Schumacker: Hi, Chuck, this is Joe Schumacker, I appreciate your presentation.

Dr. Weirich: Hey, Joe.

Mr. Schumacker: Once again, one of the reasons I love Sea Grant, and my fellow folks out there in the northwest, you guys do good work, and carrying forth this workforce development thing is just a prime example. The young fisherman's work is fantastic, as well as the aquaculture workforce stuff. You just answered one of my questions, I was going to ask you about the start dates.

And it sounds like things are just beginning to roll, because I was going to ask you how it was looking for applicants, getting any reports on that from the local projects that have been awarded. And also just stepping back on the young fisherman's one in particular, I noted the North Carolina project clearly noted financial literacy, marketing, and business. And is that a piece of the Alaska, and the other young fishermen's projects as well?

Dr. Weirich: Yeah, I believe so. I'm less familiar with the details on the young fishermen's development projects, but I believe that's a component as well. I don't know how in depth, I'm not sure how in depth compared to the North Carolina project, relatively speaking, that they're going to go, but I believe that's a component as well.

Mr. Schumacker: Thanks, Chuck.

Chair Davis: Thank you, Joe. Brett?

Mr. Veerhusen: Yeah, thanks, Chuck. These are really exciting projects, and nice to have some hope for the next generation. I'm curious around tracking progress with the various programs for young fishermen and for aquaculture. Will you be tracking sort of the metrics of the grant, and any success rate for the different program's objectives?

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For example, are you going to be tracking the amount of new crew members on boats, or the amount of people from college going into work for the aquaculture industry? I'd be really curious to know about metrics, and how you plan to track those, and if you can report back to us on some of those success rates.

Dr. Weirich: Yeah, sure. We have in place, of course our required reporting guidelines as for Sea Grant awarded projects, and we can bolster those up by working directly with the Sea Grant programs involved, and their communicators, as far as getting those metrics into our system, and making sure that they're there.

And I can say that most of our reporting, we do have a feedback mechanism where we review the reports coming in. If they're not detailed, we will send back, we'll pay particular mind to this as far as the metrics, as we do with other projects to make sure they're there. And yeah, we'd be happy to summarize those metrics and come back for a report, whether it's preliminary -- again, these are two year projects.

So, perhaps we can see how it's going like a year from now, and report back to y'all.

Mr. Veerhusen: Yeah, I just think that would be welcomed, and nice to hear. I wish you a lot of success, and I know from what I hear, getting good, able and stable participants to enter the sector is much needed across the country, so I think this would be really nice. And I think it would also be interesting to hear why some programs were successful, and maybe why some programs weren't as successful.

So, that we can think about it as a group, and help maybe with solutions or filling those gaps.

Dr. Weirich: Yeah, that would be great. And also with our offerings of the last slide that I went over, the five year plan for example, the internships plan, we're still working that out on how we're going to develop. We have the amounts and the duration in place, but the specifics on how those programs would be administrated, that might

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take a little bit of ground work to get it going.

Because the Sea Grant programs are going to have to administer that through the industry by taking on insurance, liability insurance for example. So, we're still working through that, and there will be some growing pains probably with that program, as well as other offerings. But hopefully in the long term it's going to make a difference.

Chair Davis: That's great. Thanks, Chuck, thanks, Brett. We have time for one more question. Sarah?

Ms. Schumann: Hi, Chuck. My realm is commercial fishing, but I think you can translate these questions to the aquaculture program as well even if I use commercial fishing words. But my questions relate to how -- what strategies there are in place, either from Sea Grant, or from the programs themselves that have been selected to keep these programs self-sustaining in the future, including if there's a cost share from any of the applicants, or the people who are receiving the education.

And also what mechanisms there are to ensure that those people who are receiving the education are able to self-sustain their careers in these fields, including whether there's a strategy to sort of pair this training with some access to permits.

Dr. Weirich: Yeah, as far as the latter, I believe that plans are in place for pretty much all of the awardees, the ten awarded projects that I covered. There is plans to train the workforce, train the workers basically, into the workforce, to have it sustained. That's the goal, basically.

As far as sustaining the projects themselves, this is something we'll have to look at. It's probably akin to the hubs that I mentioned that were established in 2019. Hopefully there is going to be opportunities through other projects. For example, the internships program, as well as other workforce development opportunities through our NAI competitions every other year.

That, for example a project that was awarded this fiscal

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year, for example aquaculture workforce development, again they're two year projects, perhaps that they can sustain, not just through Sea Grant, but I will mention that one example through our hubs, several hubs have been successful in finding additional funding, or other funding through other agencies.

For example there was a recirculating salmon hub that received a very large grant, or a very large sum of money from USDA to continue their work, so they were able to sustain from that measure. As far as cost sharing, we do require a 50 percent match on all of our Sea Grant awards, so that's there, and so a lot of that is matched from industry, either actual or in kind funds. Hopefully that answered it sufficiently, answered your questions.

Ms. Schumann: If I could just follow up on the question of permits. I mean, again, this is commercial fishing, and you can translate it to aquaculture, but as you know, getting access to permits or quota, whatever it is you need to access moving from the deck to the wheelhouse is difficult in commercial fishing.

And without programs to support that from the sort of permitting and financial side, there's a danger that this training can lead to careers that can only go so far. As you know, it's hard to get financing for anything in the fishing industry, banks don't look kindly, there are organization like Hugh's that I think help with this a bit, but they're few and far between.

So, I was just wondering if you have given any thought to making sure that pathways are open to the graduates of these programs to go all the way in their fishing career to fulfill their dream of becoming an owner operator.

Dr. Weirich: Sorry, I missed that about the permits. But we have been in discussion with some of our other programs about this, or some of the Sea Grant programs about this issue as well. And I did mention that we do have legal issues, we have a competition every other year, and I believe that might be a vehicle to look into that further, and bolster that up, depending on the way we write the NOFO, or the funding opportunity.

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And again, I am not as familiar with the details for the Young Fishermen's Development Act projects compared to the aquaculture workforce development projects, but that's a great point. And we can definitely reach out to those awardees, and ensure that that's something that they're thinking about going forward.

Chair Davis: Great discussion, thank you, Sarah. All right, thanks again, Chuck, for joining MAFAC, and giving us this great update.

Dr. Weirich: Thanks a million.

Chair Davis: All right, we're actually going to skip our break, because we actually kind of just had -- anyway, if you're hungry though, please feel free to get some more breakfast before they take it away. So, it's a great pleasure to have Zach Penney, the senior advisor with a focus on fisheries and tribal engagement here with us again to update us. So welcome, Zach, really great to have you here.

Tribal Engagement Update

Dr. Penney: Ta'c meeywi, good morning, it's good to see you all. I think I met most of you last time, although there might be some new folks. So, just for the sake of anybody who I've never met before, so I'm Zach Penney, and I am NOAA's senior advisor, I'm appointee, so I'm here for just a little bit, on fisheries and tribal engagement.

Although I'd say probably I do more of the latter, I help out with fisheries when I can, and I think for a lot of the NMFS stuff, I think sometimes it's best when I stay out of the way of certain things. I didn't come here to kind of become the expert on MRIP and help everything in the Gulf of Mexico, wherever there's a salmon, usually I'll jump in there, I know a few more things about that.

But I provide a lot of -- actually I should stick to my notes here. I was thinking about I should bring a presentation sometime so I can actually maybe have something documented. But happy Native American Heritage Month, that's kind of top of mind right now. I gave a presentation

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with several employees yesterday from NOAA on Native American Heritage Month.

And this year's theme has been sovereignty and identity, and have been thinking about that quite a bit. And I was kind of reflecting on my way here today about what we talked about the last time, and hopefully I don't repeat some things, because I try not to be one of those people that only have sort of one talking point, and there's certainly some things that are evolving.

Because I think last time both Heidi and Katie were trying to help me prep to think about where we were at last time, about what things might be useful for me to say to MAFAC, and I'm happy to provide updates on good things that I think have happened, challenges that remain, and also just some experiences. I didn't see -- there he is, good, Barry is here.

Some experiences with MAFAC that I think are really big success stories. So, just thinking about Native American Heritage Month, I was thinking about my role, I think last time I said one of the things I've learned so far, of all the different line offices I always feel like NMFS is the villain of the different NOAA line offices.

Often when it comes to fisheries issues, it's just amazing still, maybe it shouldn't be that amazing, just kind of the -- not just the politics, but the feelings, there's a lot of investments in terms of what fisheries can bring out of the public, states, tribes. But I've had some more experiences with National Ocean Service this year, that NMFS isn't always just the villain.

But I've developed a lot of respect, and sympathy in places where I may not have had that sympathy before for sort of all of the things that NOAA does, and when you start to work with people long enough, and you start to care about individuals, and you kind of get to see behind the scenes, and sometimes I think I was definitely a person who had perspectives of what the federal government was, or what I thought it was.

And you see the people behind the scenes, and when you

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start to develop that not just respect, but love for certain individuals, you definitely look at it through their shoes, and that's really, a really important thing. So, it's made me reflect a little bit about my role as a senior advisor, and I think last time I was still opening doors at NOAA, and trying to figure out what was behind the door, who different folks were.

And I actually don't think that that's too far off where a lot of Indian country can be with NOAA sometimes, and again, I know this is MAFAC, but for a lot of tribes, they often times, from my experience so far, might only know a certain part of NOAA, and sometimes that part of NOAA might not necessarily be the best. And that's been interesting to sort of see.

But in thinking about my role as a senior advisor, and the places where I can provide my perspective, my context, the places where it's probably best to stay out of the way, one of the things I was talking to Dr. Spinrad about this a couple months ago, and we were talking about the value of color commentary, and I was telling him a story about something I heard at the Columbia Intertribal Fish Commission one time.

Because when you think about color commentary, sometimes it's anecdotal, or where does it actually come from, and what actually gives that person the authority to say that thing, and I think Janet and Sam have heard me say this before, but at CRITFC I was told one time that there's definitely a difference between an old person and an elder.

An elder is yeah, somebody who can provide that perspective, that context, there's wisdom to it. And then sometimes an old person, sometimes you're just a person yelling at traffic. So, there's definitely a distinction between sort of the places where you're not just yelling at traffic, and where you're actually trying to provide that perspective, that's really important.

And again, I already sort of made my quip about things like MRIP, and places that I don't have the best context, and where I'd definitely defer to the subject matter

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experts. When they need me, they can ask, and I'll do my best to provide the perspective that they need, but there's definitely places in the time that I have as an appointee, and others have as an appointee, about the places we can actually move the needle.

One thing I wanted to mention, and I'm sorry, I kind of - - when I give these sort of updates and things like that, I try to follow something Daniel Wildcat said one time, he's a professor at Haskell, and he says sometimes I don't know what I'm going to say until I actually get there, that hasn't always worked for me yet, so I apologize for some of the rambling.

But I grew up with six grandmas, so my dad is Nez Perce, my mom is Polish Swedish, and with the six grandmas, I was always taught to listen, and be a listener, so I tend to be a pretty quiet person in general, but in places like D.C., sometimes being a listener doesn't always get you too far because some people talk a lot, and some people will talk over you.

And sometimes you wait for that time, and I try to follow different sort of bits of guidance I hear, and one of the things I remember somebody is like I never have regretted my silence, but I've regretted speeches that I've made, and some of those things. But sometimes, to be a listener, one of the things I'm trying to say here is in terms of trying to balance the role that I get to play for NOAA, and why I'm here.

I'm not usually the one sitting in the hot seat like Janet, or sometimes Sam is, but I also didn't come here to be a potted plant either. And there's this time where I think at NOAA, there's this line, and again, sorry, Sam, I keep on reflecting the words you and I have talked about in terms of scientific integrity in the middle, and going too far to the left, going too far to the right.

I mean, there's a political pendulum that I think I see swinging, and in terms of the thing that NOAA really relies on scientific integrity, that's a really important piece to hold. But when it comes to some of the tribal things, just to be -- to listen, and there's this fine line of tokenism in

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terms of being the tribal advisor, and what you can actually move, especially in a organization the size of NOAA and the time that you have to do that.

So, I'll come back to some of this stuff, but let me talk about some of the successes in 2023. And this didn't necessarily come out of necessarily the best place, because we definitely got dinged for consultation. But things that we're already doing with the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and the Inflation Reduction Act.

The tribal set asides, from what I've seen so far, have been unprecedented. We didn't get there easily, the investment in hatcheries and Pacific salmon, I don't think that we've ever seen that amount of money go to some of the aging infrastructure needed for certain places of Indian country, at least the places that NOAA has those authorities.

It took a lot of consultation, a lot of difficult conversations. But I think we got that to a really good place, and I think in line with a lot of the administration goals. Now, granted, there is more need than NOAA actually had money for, and so not everybody definitely did not get what they wanted.

But in terms of what I also -- this is kind of what I was saying where I had a chance to maybe sit and watch how some of the NOAA staff have dealt with their own tribal engagement, and how they do better, or find ways to evolve sort of how NOAA interacts with tribes, with funding, and identifying what the priorities are. There's definitely been some good steps made.

Another thing I just wanted to quickly mention is over the last year I did develop a draft tribal strategy, which is one thing that Dr. Spinrad did want out of me. Now, there already were pre-existing tribal strategies here at NOAA, but when I was leaving the Columbian Tribal Fish Commission to come here, I mean that was sort of my first question.

It's like well what is the job, and what exactly do you mean by tribal engagement? Because I'm not necessarily

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a specialist on outreach. So, sort of just building a foundation for NOAA to play on. I mean, NOAA already has a consultation policy that we just recently updated. But with the tribal draft strategy, I think it provided a way to talk to the different line offices about how NOAA currently invests within Indian country, and places where we can do better.

And thinking about, often times I think NOAA's compared to many of the other land management agencies in interior and agriculture that have a much longer history with how they invest in tribal country. I mean, agriculture has a forestry act, I always forget the name of the actual act. But there's vehicles that a lot of these other departments have that NOAA doesn't necessarily have.

But that doesn't mean that we need a bunch of new money either, because -- so, when I talk about investment, immediately it comes to money. I think one of the things that the tribal draft strategy will hopefully help with is, it's not necessarily about new money, it's just how you are currently investing your money, and how you actually pay attention to the different needs within Indian country.

So, that is something that we're going to work on to get completed in 2024. Another thing that I'm sure some of you might be tracking, in 2022 one of the big things that was done or accomplished that I had a hand in, was I'm getting the Department of Commerce to sign Joint Secretarial Order 3403, which was a joint secretarial order on essentially co-stewardship of land, and water.

And if you actually read that joint secretarial order, it's really geared towards those land management agencies like interior, like agriculture. And so, over the last year, NOAA in particular has taken the lead on this. So, I sort of identify what are exactly our authorities under this, in terms of how we can help better facilitate and create better co-stewardship opportunities with tribes and indigenous nations.

And so, we just recently held a whole series of consultations to hear from tribes, because throughout this

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entire process, I could talk actually the entire hour about this, but I'll keep it short. NOAA is the only one that sort of did a consultation on this, because I think interior and ag already had a good history of how they did co-stewardship.

But we also started to see a lot of conflation in various regions of people conflating what co-stewardship is with co-management, and that kind of leading to intertribal conflict. And so, one of the important things that we're working on right now, is as we sort of push on co-stewardship, and develop these definitions, that everybody is working from the same definition, and that it's clear what our authorities are.

Because the joint secretary order did not create any new authorities for NOAA, it's how we use our existing authorities. And so, we got that piece done, but it's still - - well, let me take one step back. I also think that NOAA is already doing a lot of co-stewardship, we just don't necessarily always call it co-stewardship. You see this a lot more in sanctuaries and other areas like that.

But every region is different, and that's kind of one of the important pieces to keep in mind there. Along with co-stewardship, I sort of tack on indigenous knowledge onto that. So, indigenous knowledge is another thing that in 2022 the White House released its own indigenous knowledge guidance. There was a lot of NOAA DNA already in that guidance.

And as I mentioned earlier, just back in July, NOAA updated its own consultation policy, our policy on consultation, our NAO, NOAA administrative order, and then also our own indigenous knowledge guidance. It's not necessarily a recipe book about how to actually go about incorporating or using indigenous knowledge, but I mean one of the first steps is actually just making sure people understand exactly what it is and how it's used.

I would say from a personal perspective, there is sometimes a line with indigenous knowledge that people are using a little carelessly. Sometimes people just throw it out there, it's kind of like adaptive management. A lot

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of people use the word adaptive management without really realizing where adaptive management comes from.

That there's actually some science behind it, and sort of Zach's perspective is the same about indigenous knowledge. There's a lot of place based knowledge, but there's also some really broad world view pieces of that that are really important to at least have some fundamental foundations on before using it.

So, I don't necessarily -- I think every agency is at a different place in terms of how it both acknowledges and brings in indigenous knowledge. I think NOAA has, I think, a lot to pat itself on the back for, for where it's at. But there's still a long ways to go, especially when it comes to how it finds its way into federal decision making, and I do have some more thoughts on that.

Another big success has been about -- gosh, it's time, we're moving fast. About a month ago, NOAA was part of a big intergovernmental work group on Columbia River issues. And a decision was made for the upper Columbia River, where over 300 million dollars was going to be invested, into putting fish in the upper Columbia.

Now, don't get me started on geography, when I say upper Columbia, I mean the area above Chief Joseph Dam, and Grand Coulee Dam, which are currently barriers, there is no fish passage on those areas, and it kills me every time I have to say Chief Joseph Dam as an impassible dam, it was named after a Nez Perce chief who was kind of put up in the Colville Reservation after the Nez Perce war with the United States.

But that's huge, and I'll circle back to this at the end because I want to talk about the Columbia Basin partnership, and MAFAC's role in some of these big things, because what the Columbia Basin partnership did is currently a big part of kind of what's happening in the Columbia River, and so I'll circle back to that at the end.

I also, I think I have already talked about adapting NOAA's approaches. So, both the IRA, the BIL consultations, the tribal draft strategy that I put together,

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as well as a lot of the lessons learned in a lot of the meetings that I've had, whether it's a Sanctuary roundtable we had in Alaska, where essentially we got yelled at for concerns about what sort of impacts that might have.

To even these most recent co-stewardship consultations, is that one of the big successes that I see isn't so much, like going back to what I was saying about what is my role as a senior advisor. I think when I was taking the job, okay, when am I actually going to run the ball, and make a touchdown, and spike it? It's not like that at all.

And maybe it is for some folks, but you're part of these teams that are trying to move the needle, and again, I couldn't really define to you exactly what it is necessarily to say move the needle on all things. But sometimes like with co-stewardship, sometimes it is just getting the rock rolling down the hill, and dealing with sometimes, I'd say different levels of gate keeping.

And sometimes gate keeping is important, and some agencies have reasons for why they might hold gates very tight, but often times the gate can swing both ways. And so, with adapting NOAA approaches, one of the good things that really came out of the IRA consultations is tribes are pretty up front with NOAA about what was working for them and what wasn't working for them.

And I don't want to -- I keep on using the word tribes, I want to make sure folks -- I'm not using tribes as a monolith, every region is really different, and Native American Heritage Month is a good reminder of that, and actually being a NOAA appointee on engagement has really made me take a couple steps back on occasion, and look at sort of how NOAA works with Indian country throughout from the east coast up to Alaska.

Because the way I sort of see it now, and maybe this viewpoint will change, is Indian country and federal Indian policy is a series of snapshots based on things like Manifest Destiny. The deal that happened in the east coast is far different than the deals that happened in the Pacific Northwest to what happened in Alaska, to even

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what's happened in California.

And these different regional -- I mean this is kind of what makes tribal engagement a little bit difficult, and where I've developed some respect for what the different regions deal with, but these snapshots in places like the Pacific northwest, where you have treaty tribes on both the Columbia River and Puget Sound, I mean NOAA just celebrated its 53rd birthday in October.

I mean, thinking about when some of those fish wars happened in the Pacific Northwest, NOAA had to co-evolve with that history. There's places where NOAA has had to co-evolve with tribes, and there's probably a lot better case law, and I mean the authorities within NOAA that allow them to deal with that, there is other places where there's not a whole lot.

But what I've found through the IRA consultations and BIL is there's places where NOAA is adapting its approaches, whether it's tribal set asides, because tribes have been pretty up front that competitions, especially competitions with other stakeholder groups don't always work for them, and that sort of dilutes sovereignty.

But we've also found out, and Carrie Robinson, I think has been great on this, there are also times where tribes talk about their bandwidth, and in times where tribes actually have challenges with bandwidth to write an RFP, to go through all of the reporting and even some of the data management hoop jumping that federal agencies can put on them, sometimes they only have a couple of biologists to be able to do this.

And there are places at times where tribes do like to work with non-profits, and others can help them take that off, and sometimes that's a better arrangement. So, there are these places where I see NOAA doing this work, but also I'd say with the IRA funding, and I mentioned the hatchery funding, that there are also places where NOAA -- it's not always about competitions.

That tribes have asked NOAA, can you look at 638 contracting processes through the Bureau of Indian

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Affairs that actually puts money more directly into tribal hands because nobody knows the tribal priorities better than the tribes. And we've been able to work with BIA and find ways to better do that. It doesn't scratch all the itches in Indian country.

But it's places where I think NOAA is evolving to find better ways to work with tribes. And to me, that's one of the more important things. There's splash in the pan stuff, there's the stuff that's really hot right now, whether it's north Atlantic right whales, whether it's Yukon Kuskokwim salmon, whether it's dams in the Snake River, or I'm sure I'm missing -- just red snapper in the Gulf, sharks in Florida.

All of those things, there's these things that kind of get these political flash in the pans, but there's things internally that I think will make much bigger changes for NOAA, and some of that comes back to investment. So, those are some of the bigger things I'm working on. I did have a section about challenges and priorities, let me check my time really quick.

I'm good, okay. So, I've already mentioned NOAA's investments in tribal strategy, the co-stewardship example that I think some agencies have far more investments, and actually even appropriations to allow them to work with tribes to develop co-stewardship. Within NOAA you have a tribal team, a very small tribal team, that's trying to figure out the way to do this while also not crushing regional teams underneath it with these different requests.

And also as I mentioned earlier, and this is also a great place for, I'd love MAFAC feedback, is that especially with things like fisheries, and anything that happens in the oceans within existing law, whether it's Magnuson-Stevens or something else, treaty rights, that you have to be very careful with co-stewardship given sort of what it can upset within the region.

But I would also say too, that I think it's okay to get the rock rolling down the hill on some of these things, because sometimes people just won't even attempt this,

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just because of, I think fear of kind of the hard conversations that come along with it, but it's okay to talk. This one's a little more blunt. I mentioned some of the things happening like in the Yukon Kuskokwim, and these are these periods where you wonder okay, should I just listen?

And at one point in time is your color commentary, how do you stay objective on these things? But there are places where I do get worried sometimes of history repeating itself with respect to, I'd say fisheries management. My PhD professor, who some of you might know, maybe not, Christine Moffitt, she's retired from the University of Idaho.

She was also sort of a scholar of fisheries history, and when I was doing my PhD I followed some of that with her. And we often talked about best managed fisheries, and at what time is that statement self-serving. We have so much good science out there, but when we're also talking about best managed fisheries, I mean the Great Lakes, some of the best invasive species science anywhere came out of that, as well as bioenergetics science.

But it doesn't necessarily mean that that was necessarily a good thing that was happening, and where that science came from. And where this comes back for me in terms of history repeating itself is I wasn't alive then, but I worked for a commission that was, and grandparents that were a part of the fish wars that happened in places like the Columbia River.

And relatives that were part of the fish wars that happened in Puget Sound, and there was a period where science was really weaponized against tribes in regards to bandwidth and capacity. It was more than just patronizing, it's like pat the tribes on the head, we like the way you try, but we have, whether it's a state department of fish and game, or fish and wildlife, or even federal interactions.

We know what we're talking about, we have the science, we know what's best, and it kind of discounts, I think, a

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lot of things. And we can talk about indigenous knowledge in this sense too, and this is a place where I think a lot of tribes, and I've heard this come in a lot of different consultations about just track records in terms of what indigenous knowledge serves.

I was thinking about this with regard to Native American Heritage Month. I don't remember the Nez Perce word for it, but essentially after December, the Nez Perce have various seasons, and one of the seasons we have is the time of year where you stop hunting because the female animals are carrying. I mean the knowledge is within a lot of the landscape and the tribal language already.

And tribes didn't live on this continent for more than -- time immemorial is often used, but there's archaeological records that show greater than 16,000 years in places like the Columbia Basin, that you don't live in a place that long without learning anything. And in terms of track records, and where we look at -- apologies for being a little blunt on this, but in terms of track records with fishery management.

I mean in looking at things that have happened on the east coast, in the Great Lakes, in the Gulf, Pacific northwest, and sort of where that's marching, this is kind of a really far aside, but during COVID -- so, living in Portland, Oregon there's a really good public -- OPB, Oregon Public Broadcasting was there, and I used to watch a lot of Rick Steves, who is from Edmonds, Washington.

And he tours Europe, and he goes to all these places, and he'd always talk about these time frames, and he was in Germany, and I was looking at these old sawmills, and the reason I'm bringing this up is this keys into some of the stuff with Native American Heritage Month. Sometimes it's hard not to look at comments, I know you should never look at comments on things.

But you see people make sort of quips about well it's a good thing that -- this is a paraphrase, the Native Americans were so far behind Europeans, it's a good thing that we showed up to help them manage these things,

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and it gets uglier, what do they call that, trolling, and you shouldn't pay attention to trolls, but I'd also say I've heard these same things in tackle stores in places like Portland, and Idaho where I grew up.

Where people feel safe to be able to put these things out there. But I was telling Heidi and Katie before coming up here, I always thinking about that in regards to like Nez Perce finding Lewis and Clark lost. They had guns, they had steel knives, but they were lost, they didn't have that knowledge.

And so I'm bringing that up because I was thinking about when Rick Steves was talking about these time frames in Europe, and I was looking at these Rivers, I wonder how long Atlantic salmon have been gone from that river, I wonder how long -- they were showing these forests and stuff, and it's like what sort of animals were left.

And it kind of made me just think about the different knowledge that different folks had in terms of things like conservation and development. I don't really have a good answer for that, but it just makes me think about when I see sort of some of those things, is we kind of try to find this confluence between what indigenous knowledge is, what these viewpoints the tribes have with sort of how we manage fisheries.

Whether it's a federal, state, or a tribal level, I mean all those things are sort of circling in my brain. And every region is different. I mean the dams are coming out of the Klamath, that's a huge victory. But there's more than just salmon in the Klamath, there are suckers that are in bad shape in the Klamath, there's a lot of other things happenings there.

Puget Sound is another good example. There are dams, but there's a lot of -- I mean that area is just growing in population so fast, and tribal lands are getting fractionated, and even with treaties, the treaty rights have provided extremely important leverage with court cases, it's in the case law, but show me the fish.

Even if we win in the Supreme Court, there has to be fish,

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there has to be areas to hunt. So, there's still a lot of things out there that bring me a lot of concern. And so, one of the points I'm trying to make with that, in coming back to the burden of conservation, and how we do those things, I still think that there's a lot that we have to reconcile with fishery management, and tribes, and tribal engagement.

Dr. Penney: I'll go ahead and move on here. So, you know, talking a little bit more about coast stewardship, and I was thinking about this with respect to sovereignty and self-determination. I want to make sure that I'm also clear, too, that I think coast stewardship is a way to provide tribes some more control over their own backyard, but that doesn't necessarily mean that it means that all the trees get locked up, that all the fisheries are, you know, kind of given to one user over the other. To me, co-management, it's more about self-determination and sometimes conservation and holding a state, the federal government, accountable for, you know, agreements made, whether it's treaty or trust responsibility, is really important. But sometimes it's also about development.

I mean, you know, I was in Alaska before I ever took the appointment, and when I lived in Alaska, I maintained a lot of good friends and family, particularly in Southeast Alaska. But we were in Seward, and we were on a boat going out fishing, and there was a family from, I don't remember exactly what state, it was somewhere on the East Coast, and they were talking about oil and, you know, just how important it was to make sure that that oil was not developed and that those lands were kept pristine. And I don't know if they had ever even visited those places, and they didn't really, at the time that we were talking about it and, like, yes, caribou are really important, but, you know, to me self-determination is the tribe gets to make the decision about what happens within its own backyard. And that doesn't exist everywhere, and so that piece of self-determination is really important. And the same goes for fisheries, as well.

In a lot of cases, I do think that, you know, in places like the Pacific Northwest in particular, I mean, yes,

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conservation, restoration, keeping fish from going extinct, is really important. But there's other places where I think tribes need to have that representation and that voice. And the Magnuson-Stevens Act is a really good law, but it has some really big blind spots.

So let me go ahead and transition now. I don't think I hit everything I wanted to hit, and I kind of got lost in my own notes. But, you know, going back to the Columbia River. So I talked about the upper Columbia and that deal that was made. You know, I think that is huge. I mean, that's a place where fish have been absent for a really long time. The tribes have tried to put them back, but, in terms of actually, you know, getting consistent funding to be able to do that, you know, it just hasn't been there.

But there's still another big thing that needs to be landed in the Columbia River, and I think the White House is getting closer to that and NOAA has been a big part of that. But for those that aren't following it close, you know, the Biden-Harris administration has made the Columbia River a priority. And one of the terms that they've been using a lot has been we want to get healthy and abundant returns of salmon. And that actually has origins in a MAFAC product. We called it healthy and harvestable. They didn't like the harvestable part, so they changed that. But that goes all the way back to the beginning of the Columbia Basin partnership, and I do want to just spend a little bit of time telling that story. And maybe Barry can correct me on some things on that.

When I first started working for the Columbia Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, I finished my Knauss fellowship through Sea Grant in Jared Huffman's office in 2015, and became the fishery science department major at the Columbia Inter-Tribe. And one of the first big things they sort of put in my lap was this group that was getting ready to form, and I remember a meeting at Portland State University. It was either in 2014 or 2015 with, they had a facilitator, Kearns and West, show up, and they had the sovereigns there first, which were the tribes and the states, to talk about what this partnership was going to be. And I remember there being a lot of apprehension about does this need to go through FACA, how come it's just NOAA,

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how come we don't have the other agencies that have a really big part to play in here, like Bonneville Power Administration, where's Army Corps.

And just through time, so, you know, eventually, I had to work with a tribe, and they said, well, you can be our tribal delegate. And they were just going to send me as an observer. They didn't necessarily want to participate, just go see what they're talking about. And, you know, there was a lot of skepticism, and I remember a lot of different folks showing up and lawyering up. I asked some of our CRITFC attorneys if they wanted to go and, again, they kind of acted like, well, we've seen these processes before, it's not a good use of my time. So I actually had a mathematician who I brought with me and, actually, that turned out to be a really good idea. He was looking to do more than just do his life cycle models, and so I was able to start dragging him along with me. And it was kind of a rough start. It took me two years to even understand what MAFAC was. I'm in front of the commission and saying what's MAFAC? Like, I don't really know. It's part of NOAA.

But there was a lot of grenades thrown and a lot of NOAA staff, a lot of the West Coast NOAA team jumped on those grenades when they needed to. You know, there was a lot of the same old turds from the Columbia River Basin that have been embroiled in, you know, not moving the needle for years, and so I was kind of concerned about, like, how are you actually going to change anything if you have these same folks in the room, at the table, kind of throwing those grenades? And, I mean, again, hats off to Barry and his team back then and actually Kearns and West for being able to kind of move the needle on that.

But, you know, I'll be honest, too, I hated some of the things that we did early on in that. I mean, some of the roundtables that we had. We went through different exercises with, you know, just trying to get everybody to sort of see the world from everybody's, you know, point of view. And it was kind of difficult, and there was even tension among tribes about who was at the table, who should be at the table.

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And when we ended the first part of that partnership, we got to an agreement in principle about quantitative goals. And I remember at the time, I was like is that all we really did? Is that all we established was we decided how many fish we think we want back? Because I remember it was at a period of the time in the discussion, it's like, you know, I thought that the actual number was immaterial to the tribal elders. You know, it didn't matter if it was 16 million or if it was 30 million, the tribes had a set number of fish that, at the time that the treaties were signed, it didn't matter, it didn't need to be a specific number. We just knew that it was a lot more than they were right now.

But it took a lot of doing to identify what those quantitative goals were going to be. And even at the time that we finished that, I was like it doesn't seem, I don't understand kind of how these quantitative goals are really going to change anything in the Basin. I mean, great, we got some numbers around it.

But it did provide a rallying point that, through time, I think it was, you know, as you get that buy-in among stakeholders and different sovereigns, that it started to grow on its own, not that there still weren't any problems. But, you know, maybe it was because it was the right ingredients, the right people, the right folks around for MAFAC. Heidi was there, Jennifer Lukens was there. I don't know when Mike Okoniewski turned out.

Ms. Lovett:LOVETT: It started out with Peter Shelley, who was a former MAFAC member, and then Mike Okoniewski was the liaison.

Dr. Penney: But, you know, really important to have his presence there and sort of get past some of the gatekeepers and, you know, to cut it short and to make the story abridged, I mean, it took a lot of doing, but the fact that that MAFAC product -- it sat there for a while. I think people were worried, like, once we finished that final report, like, okay, is it just going to be a report on the shelf? And there's a lot of those that we put out there and that nobody really picks up and uses. But in this particular case, I mean, those quantitative goals, a lot of the language that that group came up with through MAFAC,

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is really what has led to what's happening in the Columbia Basin right now. Now, granted, there's a lot of stuff that still needs to happen, but, in terms of what that actually became, I mean, again, like, I never thought that those quantitative goals or even that process would ever wind up in President Biden's mouth, but it provided that rallying point.

So sometimes those things that seem kind of small that folks do, turn out to be pretty big, so in terms of, I guess, the power MAFAC and sort of where, you know, I came from and sort of my perspectives on MAFAC, I mean, it's sort of amazing. There was times I definitely didn't cheer what the Columbia Basin partnership was and what it was doing, but definitely now, you know, it did move the needle. And so just having, you know, beyond just the quantitative goals, you know, still those words moving around is really important.

So apologies for being a little rambly today. I don't think I was as cohesive as I wanted to be as last time, but happy to actually -- Barry, if there's anything you want to add on about the Columbia Basin partnership and your thoughts on that versus what I said or any questions, happy to do that.

Mr. Thom: I'll be Emily just for a little while. Not much to add. I mean, one, I think Zach pointed out, I think, in going through that partnership process, one, just highlighting the people and how, you know, folks like Zach actually sticking with it and through the entire process made it successful. It wouldn't have been successful without everybody finally reaching a point where they learn from each other enough to agree and move forward. So, really, hats off to everybody who participated in that.

In terms of the MAFAC interaction, so, as Zach said, when we were originally setting up that partnership, one of the early challenges we faced was how to deal with FACA and the requirements there and trying to, for anybody who has tried to set a pretty big table, it gets really tenuous as to what you can do with that table. And so we looked at different options about whether or not there was

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enough push at any point to actually establish a new FACA committee just for that partnership in the Columbia Basin but then, really looking into it, it really became apparent that, because NOAA was leading that partnership process of trying to figure out a way to use the existing FACA committee to help us with that process, so it basically became a subcommittee type structure under MAFAC for that period of time where we, you know, we had advisors and then we would come back and report back to MAFAC, and MAFAC was, you know, the final recommendations came through MAFAC for approval up to Janet. So it gave it some gravitas that I think, in the end, have that endorsement from MAFAC and sort of carrying that through the process and gave it the staying power that I think that Zach mentioned that now, you know, while it took a long time, it's actually a useful product over time and people will continue with that.

Dr. Penney: So, yes, I don't think I have anything else but happy to take any questions.

Chair Davis: Absolutely, absolutely. Thank you so much, Zach and also Barry. It's always a treat to have you here, and I hope that we can do this regularly with you. Thanks for your great work.

So I don't know who went up first. Who was it? Pat and then Joe. Okay. Thank you.

Dr. Sullivan: Zach, I just want to thank you for being here and I really appreciate it. One of the things that I've become sensitive to and aware of, is different ways of knowing, and, obviously, scientists quite often are blind to any other way of knowing other than scientific methods. So I think it's an important role of yours to actually help convey that as you have today, recognizing there's different ways of thinking about these things and they shouldn't be battling each other. It should be something jointly in unison. So I just want to thank you for being here.

Dr. Penney: I appreciate that. And just to say more, I mean, I could talk to you folks about indigenous knowledge for a while. I mean, I'm not an expert on

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indigenous knowledge, but it's just been something that's put in front of me a lot. And one of the things with regards to climate change that keeps on coming up, too, has been whether or not -- you know, one of the ways I've spoken about indigenous knowledge is it's an unparalleled sense of knowing what has always been, in terms of baselines. And we can talk about moving baselines and how we kind of manage the margins in places now. Actually, it's not something I learned here at NOAA. Somebody used it in the Sacramento Basin, which I thought was great. But in terms of that, what happens, you know, if there is no necessarily tribal default for kind of where the climate is going. I mean, some people have raised that question, and it makes a lot of people uncomfortable.

In my opinion, I think tribes have always been climate-ready nations. I mean, we've weathered some ice ages. There's a story in the Nez Perce that we have about multiple gigantic floods that happened, which probably was the Missoula ice dam breaking.

I think tribes have always had that ability to adapt, but there's definitely been some interesting questions raised with climate-ready fisheries and being place-based, you know. Fisheries can move, especially federal fisheries can move. But, I mean, yes, it keeps me up at night if the Columbia Basin becomes inhospitable to salmon, what happens then? What do you do? I mean, things like with invasive species.

Anyways, sorry. I could talk forever about that, but thank you.

Chair Davis: Thank you, Joe, I mean Pat. We have Joe and Brett and Jocelyn and Clay.

Mr. Schumacker: Thanks, Megan. And thank you, Zach. Your plate is full, and kudos to NOAA for finally seeing the need for this senior advisor position and getting you in there and getting things going.

This is my last meeting, so I can get away with saying things here, to some degree. They could still escort me out the door. We see a looming threat on the West Coast

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with the treaty tribes right now that I've equated and others have equated with the Columbia River dams, and that's floating off-shore wind, off of our coast out here and its potential impact on treaty rights from the salmon tribes to the marine fishery tribes out there on this coast.

At the last Pacific Fishery Management Council a week ago, the Makah Tribe submitted two letters, read them into the record there, and have sent those, one to BOEM asking them to halt the leasing process on the West Coast of the U.S., the other to NMFS, NOAA Fisheries, as the person giving testimony described, the call-a-friend option, because they need NOAA Fisheries to help them assess potential impacts to treaty fisheries on the West Coast from these off-shore wind installations.

I believe, Zach, you'd agree with us that treaty tribes do not believe there's mitigation adequate that can mitigate for lost treaty rights, treaty resources. So we need to know these potential installations, what they can potentially do to the treaty resources of the tribes all up and down the West Coast but the treaty tribes are the main weapon holders in this case, if you will. And we see it as a major, major threat, and we also see it as a rock and a hard place for NOAA because of the administrative drive to put 30 gigawatts by 2030 into the off-shore, into the OCS.

So we're calling on NOAA to support this. You're going to see this soon, if you haven't already. And we're going to ask them to support us in helping us with the science necessary to determine if and what treaty impacts may be from offshore wind installations on the West Coast. And we're going to use this. Other tribes will be following the Makah Tribe with similar letters here in the near future.

So I want to give you that heads-up, and I want to thank you for your good work out there. It's a tough job. You know, the treaty tribes have a hammer. You know, we have that treaty. Other tribes are getting walked on by this process. And BOEM, not NOAA necessarily, but BOEM is basically leasing and consulting, quote-unquote, and doing this in the face of many, many complaints about

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cultural lands, cultural vistas, cultural ceremonies, cultural submerged lands that are being unrecognized in any way.

So this is an opportunity at least for tribes to have something a little bit bigger to fight back against this. We are for green energy. We want something to help us with climate change. We are against this process.

So thank you very much. I just wanted to let you know that and if you have comments.

Dr. Penney: Thanks, Joe. And I don't know if this is my last meeting, so I should probably be careful with what I say, but I do remember meeting with -- I can let Janet and maybe somebody else from NOAA maybe give the NOAA answer, but when I first, you know, I share an office with the senior advisor in off-shore wind, so I've been watching this. This is one of my earliest meetings with Pacific, you know, Pacific Northwest tribes and talking about this. It was not ever anything I was ever really tracking closely at CRITFC, but some of my early observations, and I don't think I've really changed my opinion on them, is, yes, there is a rush for off-shore wind and don't want it to be dams 2.0 where they rush, they put as many in as they can to get that energy, but not only can you actually mitigate for them but, in some cases, I don't necessarily know if they know what they're mitigating for yet, and sometimes you don't know what that impact is going to be. And so before you rush out and put all those things out there, especially in places like that, that needs to be dealt with. And you're right. I think there's other places in the country where tribes without that hammer have been able to put that leverage in.

One of the things, I was talking about history, like, you know, I was talking about the history as I see it of sort of fisheries management, which was a really, really broad course stroke, but energy, not to say the Department of Energy, but energy policy has often rolled over tribes throughout, you know, the last 200 years for sure. And same with anytime anybody makes an argument about national security. If there's a national security, they can use that argument, as well, for treaty rights or against

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treaty rights.

And so I'm with you on that. And, yes, I don't want to see dams 2.0, and I know a lot of the fishing industry doesn't want to see that either. So before you do that, you really sort of need to know what you're actually doing. We haven't mitigated for the problems we've already caused with other green energy. Just because it doesn't produce carbon doesn't mean it doesn't have an ecosystem impact; that's for dam sure, no pun intended.

(Laughter.)

Chair Davis: Thank you, Joe and Zach. Next is Brett, then Jocelyn.

Mr. Veerhusen: Thank you, Zach, for coming and being an excellent storyteller, as well. I think that goes a long way in understanding and having an impact. I've heard in various decision-making processes from the people who are making decisions that they don't respond to emotion, they respond to science, and that's when science can feel weaponizing. And I've heard you say being lawyered up. That can also be extremely intimidating for those of us who are not lawyers or scientists.

And one of the pieces and vehicles that I have seen to help look at history and the impacts and consequences, good and bad, is the equity and environmental justice strategy that NOAA has finalized and very much appreciated and that many MAFAC members played a very large role in providing comments and even seeing those words in the final strategy was heartening. And I'm just kind of curious of your role at all in the implementation of that strategy or how tribes are playing a role in the implementation of that strategy and making sure that your voices are heard.

Dr. Penney: Thanks. I have kind of three different things I'd say to that, and some of them might be a little surprising. I mean, one of them is, you know, what Janet and NMFS has done with that EJ strategy, as well as some of the other environmental justice things, have been really good because I think environmental justice and

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even diversity, equity, and inclusion sort of forums have been an umbrella that tribes have found themselves under, and it's a really important relationship, especially for any group that's been disenfranchised, whether by policy or for some other reason.

But one of the places where I weigh in, and I heard, actually, an attorney bring this up one time, that you really only see environmental justice under democratic administrations and it's become a very political term. And one of the dangers for Indian country with environmental justice is sometimes it actually dilutes what sovereignty is by putting it in the same place as equity because tribal sovereignty sometimes, you know, treaty rights and sovereignty is not the same thing as race. I mean, it's because these were sovereign nations. And so sometimes, even if it's a good intention of bringing more equity, it kind of ignores different agreements that the federal government may have with different sovereign nations. So there are times where I think there is kind of, I'm kind of overusing the word conflation, parts of what we're doing with environmental justice that do sort of run into these uncomfortable conversations about federal recognition, does a tribe have a treaty right, does it not have a treaty right, is it unrecognized, that that's still stuff that we have to work out, but that does come into play for kind of how NOAA makes decisions, whether it's a sanctuary in California or, you know, how we deal with things in Alaska where there might be multiple jurisdictions.

I don't want to make that sound negative, but it's a place where I think NOAA has to be very careful that it doesn't overgeneralize what that history is because I was thinking about this, and I think maybe your same question, is that, yes, although the lawyers probably do pick up on this quicker sometimes than the scientists do, that the context of what shaped what we have today, whether it's through case law or something else, I mean, all of that stuff is, I mean, I think that's part of the indigenous knowledge of, you know, how did we get to where we're at in the Columbia River. Well, there's a lot of history there and making sure you understand that history can be just as important to how you go about the science and, you

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know, who has the burden of the conservation and anything else in moving forward.

Also, another positive, too, and this goes back to the Columbia Basin partnership. There was times where I did, and I wasn't the only tribal member that did this, you know, we get uncomfortable when we have a Patagonia or a nonprofit, whether it's commercial fishing or sport fishing or some other water user group, at the table with us because they're not a sovereign. It's like you just gave them equal power as us in terms of decision-making, and there's times for it and times not for it.

But one of the things I felt that came out with the Columbia Basin partnership was we didn't need another data point and we didn't need another court case to kind of tell us, necessarily, what needed to happen there. There needed to be a major social change in the Pacific Northwest with respect to hydropower and all of the infrastructure that existed there. And, you know, tribes are a minority now. We don't necessarily have the voting power to get a representative or a senator elected, whether they're for or against tribes. But the NGOs, the nonprofits, that were part of that that listened, that are teachable or willing to learn and have that discourse, they had that power for that social change, and that's really important. And so that's something that I felt like I came away with, so I have a lot more respect there for people who have that collective knowledge. So, hopefully, that kind of ties into some of what you're asking.

But the EJ strategy is really important, but there are places where I think tribal sovereignty can get diluted and that's just a place where we have to step carefully.

Chair Davis: Thanks, Brett. And thanks, Zach. Jocelyn and then Clay.

Dr. Runnebaum: I have a lot of questions, and I'm going to keep it short, but I'm wondering, Megan, for time, are we doing okay on time or should we -- okay. Otherwise, I'm happy to pass that to Clay first.

Thanks for coming and giving us an update. It's nice to

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see you again. I guess my fundamental question sort of lends towards this idea of co-stewardship and indigenous knowledge. And I think that on the East Coast, particularly in Maine, we've seen the Wabanaki people separated from their life ways next to the coast and kind of a loss of indigenous knowledge around the marine environment. And I'm curious what your thoughts are on what role MAFAC can play in providing any policy guidance, recognizing there's not a lot of indigenous people sitting at this table currently, of how best to think about sort of incorporating indigenous knowledge moving forward.

I think that NOAA has done a tremendous job by creating a cooperative research branch and looking at the place-based knowledge that fishermen provide, and that sort of elevated that perspective. And I recognize that there's a risk of sovereignty issues here. So I'm trying to phrase this as best as possible, but I'm curious on your thoughts on if you see a role for us to provide any input or insight, particularly around the indigenous piece but the co-stewardship piece is also interesting, as well.

Dr. Penney: Yes, no, it's a really good question and one that I don't have a straightforward answer on. I do have a straightforward answer, but it's easier said than done. I mean, the straightforward answer is, you know, bring them to the table. Indigenous knowledge isn't something that can be extracted and put into any of the models that NOAA uses.

And I kind of, I don't think I articulated it well in my notes, but, you know, indigenous knowledge and co-stewardship, I think, go hand in hand. The best way to have indigenous knowledge into our decision making, even in federal management, is that co-production of knowledge, that they need to be there working with you either at the beginning or right alongside. And getting them to the table is the first step. The more complicated piece is did you get the right people to the table, what other tribes might have interest there, but also, like I said earlier, some of the things that have occurred in the northeast are far different than other places.

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And so, you know, I have a lot of thoughts in sort of your question. One of them, I want to say, you know, I'll try not to get too far deep into some of the things I don't know very much about, but in conversations I've had with Janet, and, again, these are Zach thoughts, but, you know, I don't know very much about Northern Atlantic right whales. I know what I see in the news and I see what NOAA tracks, but I'm thinking about that, and some of the northeast tribes have brought up their concern for those animals and sort of the policy pieces at play in that, about whether or not ships need to slow down, whether people need to change the way they fish, and that adaptation. But I've been thinking about that just in respect to what happens when an indigenous voice is lost from the landscape and management. In Zach's opinion, the ecosystem suffers when the indigenous voice is removed.

That's what I was referring to earlier with managing to the margins, and this gets to moving baselines, that NOAA is 53 years old, there's a lot of state agencies that are younger, and sometimes we didn't start managing things until there was a problem with them. And that set baseline, this is, again, not everything is about the Columbia Basin partnership, but why those quantitative goals were important. At some point in time, somebody said delisting is the lowest possible goal you could be shooting for. We want healthy and abundant runs. We want something much higher.

But the point I'm trying to make with North Atlantic right whales is, you know, some of the loudest voices there haven't been with tribes. And sometimes when I hear somebody say, like, we've never caught an Atlantic right whale in this trap, it's like, well, there used to be a lot more right whales. There used to be a lot more Indians up there, too, and same with other places. And those sort of perspectives, that's kind of why you need that voice there.

So for MAFAC, I mean, making sure that you're bringing them to the table and bringing the right folks to the table, too. That's easier said than done.

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I want to talk more about this. Sorry. I watch a lot of TV apparently. There's a good documentary I just saw about the northeast and Cape Code about great whites returning because of the Marine Mammal Protection Act. There's more seals than there used to have been, but people got used to not having great whites that close and that many of them. People have been attacked, somebody got killed. And it was just like Jaws. I mean, you kind of watch people, like, we need to protect ourselves. But, again, this is another Zach perspective and just the way I grew up, not everything is an amusement park for you. The wild is a good thing. I mean, if you're afraid of sharks, don't go to the ocean, don't pet the bison, don't camp with grizzly bears.

Sorry. You reminded me of something. This is so far away from your question, but it's really important for NOAA. There is a killer whale that was kept in captivity that just died on the East Coast, and I never ever thought about this animal until Tokitae died. And I was kind of watching the reactions to it, and I knew where the Puget Sound tribes were on that because they told us. But this made me think about indigenous knowledge, not so much about, it was about respect and ethic. This is some of the stuff that I think indigenous knowledge teaches, it isn't always necessarily place-based, is that you don't treat that animal that way. And I'm sure that that killer whale inspired perhaps generations of people to become marine biologists, but I think that there was native people saying don't do that, don't take that animal away from its home. Some people paralleled it to taking an Indian child and putting it in a boarding school a long way from home where it died alone.

To me, those pieces of indigenous knowledge are really important in terms of, you know, this gets back to maybe that question about science about that, you know, staying, not going too far to one side or the other of advocacy because as soon as you lose that objectivity, then, yes, what good is that science. But there are things that I think indigenous knowledge has about how America needs to actually live with everything it's with, whether it's what Timothy Treadwell did with the grizzly bears and got himself killed. There's a respect that you have for

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these animals and things you just don't do, and I think that knowledge is there because people don't listen.

So I think that's one of the really important reasons to get them to the table and to, you know, for folks to really listen to sort of exactly what -- indigenous knowledge isn't just myths. It's not just platitudes. You know, just people need to stop and listen.

So that's probably not the most direct answer, but you made me think about a lot of different things with that.

Chair Davis: Yes. Thanks for that Zach and Jocelyn. Clay and then Barry.

Mr. Tam: Yes. Thank you, Zach. Clay here from the Western Region, and your speech hit home. So many parallels with what you said about indigenous knowledge. We call it empirical knowledge. Similar. And I think that if we could blend the two and bring it to the light of science in the terms of our ancestors were resilient. They were on this planet for a long time. The cultures were here way before our area was conquered, so to speak. And I think paying attention to that, like you said, is really important. And a lot of that is forgotten today because of the way things are educated.

In Hawaii, when the missionaries came, the language was erased, the land division was erased, management of resources was erased. Fortunately, for the native populations here, there's some treaties. We don't have any treaties, so we're stuck behind the eight ball. It's unfortunate that our community hasn't formed or been to that level or want to be at that level, but they think they can hold out. So it makes it very difficult for people to come to the table and have an understanding amongst those that would rather see Hawaii their own backyard. And so that makes it very difficult.

But at the same time, I think there's, you know, if we can strike a balance, like people in this room, MAFAC can bring a lot of balance to things. I think actions speak louder than words, and if we can help incorporate that into the future vision, then we can all live better and more

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together.

My reference the other day about, you know, embracing empirical knowledge, it wasn't to go back and start this thing from the start again, but it was to study and understand those keys that you talk about. We shouldn't play with the bears and we've got to be careful of swimming with the sharks. That's all good stuff because there were seasons and times and people were very connected to the ecosystem. So when they mention ecosystem management at home and within the purview of the agencies, I laugh because it's really not. If you want to know about ecosystem management and living in the ecosystem that you're in, go to the native groups because they know. That's so important.

But, hopefully, at some point, it will come together and people will come to an understanding. We say yin and yang. There's a balance, it swings one way, it swings the other. So, hopefully, in the future, but, yes, you ought to come to Hawaii. Thank you.

Dr. Penney: I know we're low on time, but, no, that kind of jogged my memory on something I wish I articulated better when I said it the first time, but how MAFAC can help. This gets back to that representation and that knowledge.

I was trying to say this earlier, and I think I got tripped up. But, you know, when I was talking about NOAA is not necessarily set up, NOAA is doing some really good things with tribal engagement, but we're not set up the same way as Department of Interior, which has Bureau of Indian Affairs. And bringing more tribal folks in, and what I was trying to say earlier is I mentioned the word tokenism. I think NOAA, to provide the appointment, it was a step forward. But what will always concern me is you're just going to bring in just me? I can't turn the ship. I can give you my color commentary.

There needs to be a will there, there needs to be a way to change the investment in terms of what NOAA is doing. And I have lots of my own opinions, but what I've also seen is that there are a lot of different places in NOAA

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that are trying to do better. There's a lot of really enthusiastic folks. But for MAFAC -- well, the tokenism is it can go either way. You can't just give a few folks at NOAA who hold a pretty big tribal portfolio with a lot of, you know, regional diversity in terms of how NOAA interacts with tribes, you know. Three or four of us, whether we have Ph.Ds. or law degrees, is not going to be able to change that.

So all the places where that representation can be increased and, if MAFAC is one of the ways to do that, I think that that's definitely worthwhile because, yes -- I've been on these consultations and people are yelling at, not necessarily me but sometimes at me. I mean, stuff that I used to hear our commission say all the time. I used to kind of get concerned because I used to tell our commissioners, like, go talk to a representative, don't just go off on that one thing because you're not wasting their time, you're wasting your time. Make sure you hit all the points you want to. But it's really weird to be the person sitting in the seat for NOAA kind of saying you guys did this, we don't have that federal recognition. People need to vent, but it makes you kind of feel weird sometimes. I've had these moments where I was like, man, I hope I'm not here as like a native shield for NOAA. I didn't come here just to provide fluffy land acknowledgments. I'm not here to give you your presentation for Native American Heritage Month, and I didn't come here just to listen. Like, there's places where we need to move the needle, and that's sort of still been the trick. But, again, that's kind of why sometimes, even if I don't know where that rock is going to roll downhill, like with co-stewardship, make some states and people really angry. But, you know, it still seems worthwhile to get that moving.

So thanks for those goods words because I do think MAFAC could be one of those places where it's not just the handful of indigenous folks who are trying to make that change.

Chair Davis: Very good, very wise points. Thank you. Barry, did you have --

Mr. Thom: Well, actually, Zach just started to cover it a

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little bit. Zach, thinking about it, and I'm a big fan of yours, but there's only one of you. And like you said, your clock is ticking. You have a limited time engagement, but can you talk about are there any efforts in terms of improved education, training, and sort of how to sort of spread your approach to other NOAA employees or throughout the agency so at least the employees within the agency have a better working relationship or potential better working relationship with indigenous people?

Dr. Penney: Yes-ish. The EJ strategy that was brought up earlier, I mean, there are steps forward that are happening. But one of the reasons I put together the tribal strategy, there were already words down on paper. There were already tribal liaisons, in NMFS in particular and folks in these regions. But we can have the best tribal consultation policy in the world. It doesn't work if nobody really uses it or if they treat it like the instruction booklet in your vehicle where you only pull it out when you have a problem. Like, there actually needs to be practitioners that actually understands the legal basis for this.

But, again, consultation isn't the only way to engage with tribes. Sometimes, tribes just want to have a damn conversation, and they don't want necessarily everybody lawyered up. I keep on talking about gates and stuff like that. Sometimes, tribes want to build that trust. Sometimes, the changeover, I think one of the things that definitely frustrates tribes, and I remember the Commission talking about this a lot is every time you have a new crop of appointees come in, you have to re-teach them all the context.

So I think some of the things I'm trying to set into place is, you know, I think NMFS tends to be ahead of the curve with regards to consultation policy because we get probably some of the more challenging things in Indian country, whether it's treaty fisheries, fisheries in Alaska. But every line office needs to understand what its impact because I think there's been some line offices, like, even like weather service, well, I don't know what sort of, necessarily, equities we have in there. We don't do consultation that much but to tell them it's more than consultation, it's more than when there's going to be a

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problem where you're trying to do some sort of remediation or retroactive thing that has been done.

One of the efforts that I'm trying to leave with that outlasts me, outlasts the appointment, is, yes, to develop these folks within every line office that you'd have more, you'd have a community of practice, as opposed to reaching for the consultation policy every time there's a problem or just one person or one or two people. But there's plenty of efforts sort of in the different regions.

One of the things I think NOAA needs to do is provide a funnel. I mean, this is beyond just stuff like consultation. I mean, stuff like attending the American Indian Science and Technology Society meeting. There was recently a big SACNAS meeting in Portland, Oregon. NOAA doesn't necessarily have the best funnel for all the things it's doing in Indian country, so you have all these separate parts across the line offices. I don't think we've found the way to build that collective strength yet, so that's another thing.

It sounds really simple, but another thing, too, that I think has to happen, I started off with this, is that, you know, NOAA is a really big house, it's still a big house for me, and for some tribes, you know, they don't really know all the different parts of NOAA. I think that doing better in terms of how tribes can actually navigate what NOAA is and how to get, you know, what doors to knock on is a really important thing to go forward. I mean, that's basic engagement and outreach, and I think there's others at NOAA that can figure that out far after I'm gone.

But that is a place where I do think we need to pay closer attention because it's clear, and anytime we meet with tribes and some of these bigger consultations that they might only know NMFS, might only know Ocean Service, and rarely is any other line offices.

So, again, that's kind of broad. I don't, like, have anything specific. But the tribal strategy is, I'm kind of building it like a microscope 4X, 10X, and is it 40 X? Like, I'm doing the highest possible magnification. Line office is the next level of magnification, and then the region would be the

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next level of magnification. I think that's one way to look at that just because every region is so different. So at least putting a template together. The word framework is overused, but that's what it is. It's a framework.

Chair Davis: Okay. Thank you. Meredith will be the last one. Actually, Kellie wants to say something, too. So after Meredith and Kellie, yes, we'll need to wrap up.

Ms. Moore: I just wanted to say I forget what we're calling our subcommittee that worked on the EEJ comment letter within MAFAC, but we haven't convened since we issued that letter. And I think there's a lot in this conversation for us to think about. And so I just wanted to flag that, after today's meeting, I think we should find time to, A: invite and make sure everybody who wants to participate in that subcommittee can join and that we then look for ways to re-establish that regular meeting and think about what our next steps should be.

Chair Davis: Great point, Meredith. Go ahead, Kellie. No. Okay. We're going to wrap up then. Oh, go ahead.

Dr. Penney: Just one final word. I actually brought some stuff. I wanted to read you all a quote because I was going to tie this into somewhere else and I completely forgot I had this paper in front of me. Just in terms of interacting with tribes because it's a Salish speaker or a Salish woman who kind of put this out there. And I pulled this out with regards to indigenous knowledge, but it's good, they're good words for any interactions, I think, with tribes. And one of the places where I think sometimes that friction exists or where things get fumbled, but, you know, her words are: It's not your role to come and convince me this is what it looks like, this is how it is because that's the way I see it, which is very disrespectful and destructive because you're not seeking clarity, you're seeking to be aggressive, you're seeking to be dominate, and that's not acceptable. What you should be doing very clearly saying is we have this problem, clearly one of us doesn't understand it, and so I'll try and tell you how I see it, what I know about it, how I think about it, how I feel about it, how I feel it might affect me or affect things that I know about, and that will help inform you. But I'm

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requesting the same things from you. I want you to tell me how you feel about it, how it affects you, the things you know about how it affects you, and then we'll have a better understanding and we'll have a better chance at better understanding of what it is we need to do, and we can only do that by giving as much clarity from our diverse viewpoints.

And so providing that space, this kind of ties into our presentation and also with indigenous knowledge, this is one of my overused points is sometimes it's not the most recent data point that really goes into what the best available information is. Sometimes, it's that perspective that just hasn't been there. So that's the words I'd leave you with.

Chair Davis: Thank you again, Zach. You gave us a lot to think about, and we really appreciate that. So our next item on the agenda is the action item from the two subcommittees. And so I'd like to start with Jocelyn and Meredith, and then we'll move over to Stefanie and Brett.

Approval of Draft Recommendations

Ms. Moore: Hello. It's us again. I'm tired after three days, so the level of comedy may be reduced. We have received, we have sent you all a letter, and there have been minor changes made since then. So minor change number one is that I realized when I added a summary at the top of the letter that I left out a point that was important, so I'll point out where I've added that. And then we received some feedback about how to better incorporate recreational fishing throughout the letter, and so we've made a number of changes to try to add that, and I think that's the sum total of the new changes that exists. And so, largely, it is the letter you all agreed on with minor changes, which we will now walk through. Which we will walk through soon. Which we will walk through later. We're doing it now. This is to build your anticipation. Can't wait.

Okay. Change number one, in an early-on sentence, we noted some policies and priorities and strategies that also include or are important in the context of thinking about

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climate-ready fisheries. We have added the saltwater recreational fisheries policy to that list. We do not need to see the comments. That's change one.

Change two, actually, I think has been accepted, so I would just direct your attention to that -- like, scroll just slightly down. Yes. Okay. This paragraph, which is the one that I added based on Meredith extemporaneized during the meeting, Megan said add that, that sounds good. We added this paragraph.

So in the sentence that says broadly the concept of Climate-Ready Fisheries encompasses, when I went back and looked through the bulk of the letter, I noted that I neglected to include the word resilience in my summary. So we have added manages for resilience to the third of my semicolon delimited list. Great. This is just making it more consistent with the rest of the letter. Spectacular.

I'm going to keep going until someone objects, so please actively object.

Scrolling, scrolling, scrolling. I think it's on page -- I don't have page numbers on my version right now. Yes, spectacular. These changes are in order to better recognize recreational fishing. This paragraph is the first paragraph of the background section where we are just laying out things that are important and relevant, so I will read this sentence: It impacts the number of jobs that could be supported throughout the supply chain and in fishing-related and tourism businesses, increases dependence on imported seafood from countries with less sustainable management systems and treatment of seafood workers, reduces opportunity for sustainable access to abundant fish populations for recreational fishers, and impacts the food security of our nation.

There is a lot of text in the rest of that paragraph where we focus substantially on subsistence and indigenous tribes, et cetera. I couldn't put everything in every sentence, but, hopefully, this is a better recognition of their recreational impacts.

Great, I'm going to keep scrolling. Similar objective for

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this sentence. This is in our first paragraph of our discussion of what Climate-Ready Fisheries needs to address: So, additionally, non-climate science and management structures often constrain resource users' ability to adapt to these changes. All of this can create challenges for fishermen from all sectors through changes and access to quota and permits, changes in fishing opportunity, market changes, processing capacity, and food security.

I agree that it is difficult to know what words to use.

One comment that I did not address, which I will just say out loud, is that we were asked who decides what is equitable, and I have decided that is outside of the scope of my letter that we're working on together. So I appreciate that and also will continue to move past it as feedback and hope that we figure that out soon.

And then the last change is, no, sorry, I think there's two more changes. This sentence we just added: as well as recreational as far as seafood businesses are concerned. There's that one. I can read this whole sentence if you would like, but it's just adding -- okay. Great. I'm glad we're all on the same page.

And then we had a typo. Shout outs to catching the typo. And then one additional. This is the very last change, which was there was some question about not including sort of the need to better detect, to better understand baseline ecosystem states, as well as monitoring for changes. I've added that. I will say that wasn't the primary focus of our letter because we were really trying to focus on, with respect to the fact that the agency is doing a lot of the science, the thrust of our letter was largely focused on some of the getting us to the management challenges. Regardless, it was a good comment, and so I have added it here.

So this bullet point now states in the first sentence that managers will still need to keep acting using the best available information, even as uncertainty increases. And the new sentence says: Scientists will also need to consider intentionally adopting survey and assessment

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approaches, expanding efforts to check and monitor ecosystem changes, and developing new modeling and forecasting techniques to meet new challenges.

This concludes the changes to your letter.

Chair Davis: Joe.

Mr. Schumacker: Thank you, Madam Chair. And thank you, Meredith. I think it's a great letter. Are you looking for a motion?

Ms. Moore: I would love a motion.

Mr. Schumacker: I would move that this letter be accepted by MAFAC with the changes noted here and any additional edits needed to finalize it for sending to the Secretary. Thank you.

Dr. McDonald: Second.

Chair Davis: Wait. Can we make the motion a little wider and describe what the letter, like, just put a little descriptor in there, the motion? Because you just said the letter.

Mr. Schumacker: I won't repeat the entire motion, but the letter refers to building a climate-ready nation, the need for a Climate-Ready Fisheries policy.

Chair Davis: Okay. Second for that? Who seconded? Okay. Great. So we're open for discussion. Okay. So now we go to vote. Wait. Let's vote. All those in agreement, say aye.

(Chorus of aye.)

Chair Davis: Any abstain? Any nays?

Ms. Lovett: And anyone on --

Chair Davis: Anybody online? Ryan or Matt. Okay. Fantastic. Congratulations for this. Great work.

(Applause.)

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Ms. Moore: Extensive thanks to the team, which we could not have done it without everyone. Also to the support of NOAA Fisheries in helping us dig into this and try to make a really useful recommendation. So lots of credit to everyone. Thank you.

Chair Davis: I just want to say that, when I became chair, this was one of the first charges as a chair, and it was passed down from Erica, if you remember. And it was also passed over with the charge from leadership, from Janet. And so I can just let you know that it really touches me deeply that we did get this completed during the time that I was chair, so thank you for your great work and for the support also of Katie and Heidi for working with you.

Now the next one that happened. So that would be Stefanie and Brett.

Mr. Veerhusen: One thing that I just sort of overall context of the letter negotiating, this group chose our words very carefully and very intentionally. There was a lot of back and forth about why we were using words such as the importance of data acquisition and management capabilities that are foundational to the agency's climate, ecosystem, and fisheries management and services to try and be all encompassing while also calling particular emphasis on fisheries, as well.

So we have gone, yes, I just want to say that we have really chosen our words carefully and talked about them at length through many different meetings. Out of the 1800 words, I will also say that just about 650 are original. The rest is quoting other people and other reports that Meredith loves.

Meredith, I just have to use you as comedic relief this time. Is that okay?

(Laughter.)

Ms. Moore: Yes.

Mr. Veerhusen: Okay. Great. Because I'm also running out of ideas.

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Ms. Moore: Yes, I consent to being an object of derision.

Mr. Veerhusen: No, admiration. I have never seen anybody work so fast and wordsmith something so well.

So some of the major sort of encompassing changes that we heard in the discussion, Kellie asked -- I have to pull up different versions here -- having a little bit kind of more emphasis on the agency managing data, storing data, and kind of the intent of that. If you scroll down to the second page, and I'm just going there first in the discussion -- right there, yes -- we added quite a bit of meat to MAFAC requesting department support for fully integrating the fisheries data acquisition plan into the President's budget planning process and Blue Book formulation, and this is where in track changes we wanted to add and respond to your request. DAP is expected to help the agency identify and plan for opportunities to pursue advanced data acquisition approaches, such as the use of uncrewed systems, automated sampling, remote sensing, acoustics, molecular tools, electronic monitoring and reporting, and enhanced cooperative research opportunities. These will be critical components to expand the agency's data capacity to meet current and future needs. Additionally, the agency should work to evolve its functional planning and facilities resourcing budgeting processes and accompanying communication strategies, all further addressed below.

So we went back and forth a lot on the bullets that I'll move to next, even though they're above. Can you scroll up a little bit? I can go through all the wordsmithing, but I think we did that already in the discussion. We did not change very much since we last met, other than that paragraph. There are a few additions, but the track changes that you are seeing are ones that we left from kind of the first iteration. We discussed them, I believe, already as a full MAFAC and have largely left them the same. I just want to make sure that I do highlight the very few ones that we added last night.

In the second paragraph, we added to the sentence:

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however, MAFAC is concerned that the administration's inadequate long-term budget planning exacerbates the challenge in securing sufficient funds through appropriations to fund Marine survey and data management capabilities, et cetera. So we actually emphasize what it is exacerbating.

On the fourth paragraph starting with simply put, that is all the same, as we discussed yesterday, except we did add: failure to adequately fund and implement efficient survey systems and data collection is having a detrimental impact and jeopardizes the future of fishing communities in the nation. So we emphasize the urgency and the impact.

And hawkeye Meredith helped us with making sure that we bulleted and numbered correctly per the NAPA report. Thank you. And if you scroll to -- oh, what page am I on? Page three, at the end, the very, very, very bottom, we did want to emphasize that the recommendations in the NAP report that we reference in this letter does not imply a lack of support for other recommendations in the report. So we did want to make sure that we support all of them, just wanted to keep it brief.

And that is it, actually, for changes that were made between when we discussed this yesterday and considered a lot of different suggestions and negotiating kind of word choice. So I think that captures everything. We can do that if there's a motion.

Ms. Zanowicz: So I just wanted to add one thing. Sorry. So we did get some comments related to who we're directing the letter to, whether it's the department, NOAA, NOAA Fisheries. I think one thing could be just clarifying who this letter is being directed to, so I just want to flag that. I sent that to you this morning, so you may not have gotten it.

Ms. Lovett: To clarify, it's not that it doesn't say Dear secretary, we understand that. It's just that interchangeably in the letter, occasionally, other agencies are mentioned, and we just want to make sure you're --

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Mr. Veerhusen: I'm open to suggestions. Stefanie and I did discuss that suggestion and have respectfully declined. We think that who we are addressing it to, being that it is to the Secretary of Commerce and then the funding to the agency, and we kind of go kind of in this pyramid. And so who and how we name agencies and offices and departments, I think, is intentional.

Ms. Lovett: Thank you for clarifying.

Chair Davis: I'm just curious. In the cover letter to the letter, the memo, there's also some CCs on it, right? Yes. So that will also get out to other places within NOAA Fisheries.

Mr. Veerhusen: I will just add one of the expectations and hope, look, this was difficult and not meant to be retaliatory or, you know, some sort of sword of Damocles that is coming. It is meant to be helpful for not just MAFAC but for other stakeholders, once this is public, if it is public and voted on, to be informative and useful and educational and also as a way for us to be working with agency staff on a continuous basis for updates on this letter where we may need more clarity, may need more information, may need to provide capacity where we can. So I think that is also a hope that we could get updates on these requests.

Chair Davis: Yes, absolutely. That's a really important document. All MAFAC documents are public. And if we decide that we want it to be elevated into more of the public arena, that's something that we can certainly discuss with communications. So great work. Kudos to you, Stefanie and Brett and team that worked with them.

Let's see who would like to make the motion. Okay. Sara.

Dr. McDonald: I would like to make a motion that MAFAC approve of this letter, as revised, accept the changes, and move it forward.

Chair Davis: Can you clarify what this letter means?

Dr. McDonald: Sorry. This letter recommending strategy for the budgeting process for NOAA Fisheries' data

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collection addressed to the Secretary of Commerce and all the sub-divisions and organizations within.

Chair Davis: Yes, you can take it that deep if you'd like. Okay. And a second?

Dr. Runnebaum: Second.

Chair Davis: Jocelyn second. Okay. Awesome. So now we'll go into discussion, and I know Cisco would like to say a few words and then maybe others.

Dr. Werner: Thank you, Megan and Brett and Stefanie. Really, thank you for the letter. It captures a lot of the challenges that we're facing, as well as the aspirations in front of us in terms of how to overcome these challenges, and so thank you so much for the letter.

You know, as I read it, I was trying to say, okay, what is the one thing that we could jump into and capture it, and I think it's that point about the ten-year planning. The forward planning captures that we need this. It's a conversation that's been had in other contexts. Other line offices have engaged in this ten-year planning, and it's something that we need to do, whether it's triggered by midlife repairs or the fact that we're changing the way that we sample and so on. That's, to me, the core. We need to think about what that ten year is and how we're going to get to those ten years funding and otherwise.

And so at the end of page one, and it's where you have one, two, three, where you nicely frame the importance of ten-year planning, and then I don't know if there was an implied prioritization of those one, two, threes, or there were just examples of what should be part of the ten-year planning because, if there is an implied prioritization, then maybe I would have thought, well, maybe I could move things, I would say I could see a different way to think about it. And if somebody reads it as, okay, these are the next steps that we need to do, then some of it is within our purview, some of it might fall into another line office's purview, and so on. And so that's really what I wanted to say is how, you know, the take home is we have to come up with this ten-year detailed

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plan and anticipated cost and thresholds and objectives, if you will. What is our objective of ten years and what is the threshold if we don't, if we're not able to garner everything that we need to do.

Thank you. Thanks.

Ms. Moreland: I'll look to others who have been involved in this discussion to see whether there's any disagreement with this, but I think they're meant to be parallel and interconnected, the three, and it's not meant to be a sequence, nor a prioritization exercise, one, two, and three. And that's reflected in the very small paragraph that follows those bullets, recognizing how complex this is and that there are a lot of uncertainties that are going to be beyond the control of the team driving any one of these projects, including technical, fiscal, and operational uncertainty.

And so part of the ten-year in looking at these parallel work streams is to do so with a risk-based mind set and fiscally-informed scenario mind set.

Chair Davis: Okay. Thank you for that. Could I make a suggestion in the memo that goes with the letter that it does highlight the ten-year plan, you know, that it becomes a solid feature within the memo.

Okay. So Pat but also Tom, I believe, had his hand up. Is that right, Tom? And Meredith, I see you. Okay.

Mr. Fote: I just took it down. I was having video problems. That's all.

Chair Davis: Okay. Very good. Thanks. Pat and then Meredith.

Dr. Sullivan: Yes. I just want to say, and correct me if I'm off, that the ten-year plan is a good thing to focus on, but it serves several purposes. One, like we just heard from the Sea Grant folks, is it provides anticipation for those who are outside the realm as to what's going to happen, what to expect for that.

The other, I think, that we were trying to think, and

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correct me if I'm wrong, is that it facilitates, in addition to some of the other stuff that you were talking about, Cisco, earlier, for us to have a framework from which to communicate the importance of things that are about to happen that we might not have been able to see anticipated before. And so there's those two elements that are hanging on this ten-year framework that I think will be helpful to the service.

Chair Davis: Very good. Good points. Thank you, Cisco, in case I forgot to do that. Meredith.

Ms. Moore: In case the numbering is helping to imply a prioritization, you could simply switch those to bullets of the three things that we have pulled out there, and that might reduce the number threat. Yes, friendly amendment.

Chair Davis: Yes, that's a good point.

Mr. Veerhusen: I think that's a good idea and accept that friendly amendment.

Chair Davis: Go ahead, Kellie.

VICE CHAIR RALSTON: One quick comment. You know, I think the planning really is kind of the crux of this, and so I appreciate the conversation there. Overlaid on top of this week, I've also been involved in Everglades restoration work. They had a task force meeting this week where they presented their annual updated integrated delivery schedule, which lays out all 68 Everglades restoration projects. But one of the things that has been most helpful for those who advocated for funding for this has been the top line that they have that goes across. In addition to by year, they give the last three years of funding received, both broken out by federal and state, and then they project what the necessary funding would be for the years that we don't have appropriations for to maintain that schedule.

And so I think something like that, I would hope that what you all come up with does not look like the IDS because it's mind boggling, but just that general concept of here

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are the things we want to do, here is the time line over which we need to do it, and here's the funding we have and here's the funding we need, and that number, quite frankly, is the most powerful thing that you can use going into a congressional office. So I just wanted to point that out.

Chair Davis: Oh, yes, that's really great, Kellie. Thank you. Jocelyn.

Dr. Runnebaum: Yes. Thanks. I don't think this is really something that needs to go into the letter per se, but I think it's a reaction maybe, Cisco, to what you were thinking about in terms of which line office is responsible. And I think it's really important for NOAA Fisheries and OMAO to really be able to communicate the needs for these research vessels and the maintenance and, like, repairs that are needed in order to keep maintaining the science.

And so I do understand that it seems like there's some coordination that could be useful. And I'm sorry that I'm bringing this up under the letter, but I guess it's just a little aside that we really have to coordinate to make this work.

Chair Davis: Thanks for that point, Jocelyn. Meredith, are you -- okay.

(Laughter.)

Chair Davis: Oh, that's great. All right. All those in favor, aye.

(Chorus of aye.)

Chair Davis: And I see hands up on virtually, so thank you for that. And any abstains? And any nays? Okay. So it passes unanimously. Congratulations for the great work.

(Applause.)

Ms. Zanowicz: I just want to clarify the changes that are going to be made. So what I heard, to highlight the ten-year plan, bullets instead of the actual numbers. Is there

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anything else that I'm missing?

Mr. Veerhusen: What I heard was just in the memo being sent to highlight ten year and then just changing the numbers to bullets and the appropriate CCs. Great.

Chair Davis: Those are two amazing work products that just got approved, so it's really fantastic.

So two things. There were some breakout sessions this morning, so I'd like a report back from the rec and also from the commerce that you were working on, Linda. And then for the subcommittee working on Climate-Ready Fisheries, next steps, and then I think you guys have completed your task, right? Okay. So it would be those three updates then. Okay.

So do we want to start with rec?

Dr. Sullivan: Yes. Donna was not able to make it, so we had a brief meeting. Broadly speaking, we haven't really met over the year, but various things have come up that are worth considering. Among those things were the things that were mentioned to Russ at our earlier meeting, the FES relative to the MRIP report, as well as considering information gathered through, as Donna put it, other data streams, which I think, in her way of thinking, included what fishermen are seeing in the process of actually catching fish.

And then, Kellie, we had an extended discussion earlier this morning about socioeconomics. And, Kellie, if you want to talk to that briefly. Thank you.

VICE CHAIR RALSTON: Yes. So there's been an ongoing conversation. I know there's a broader conversation about socioeconomic information in general at the agency, but specifically looking at recreational fisheries, you know, back in 2018, at the recreational summit before last, it was a high priority talking point in the conversation at that summit among the agency and stakeholders and was highlighted as a real need within the agency.

And so earlier this year, the agency convened a

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recreational socioeconomic panel of experts to kind of get some additional input there, and there's a final report that's come out of that. I think our subcommittee feels like there's additional steps that could be taken by the agency, and we would request kind of the approval of MAFAC to move forward in that regard, really looking at a formal response from the agency on that final report that came out of the panel of experts, and then also looking at some next steps that we might be able to recommend to the agency in general.

So that was kind of an action item that we would appreciate the full committee's support on. And there's a couple of other things, but do you want me to do it all at once or do you want to -- okay. And then two other items that came up for conversation, one, kind of touching on what Pat had discussed and all the data conversations that we've had over the last few days, really kind of asking for regular status updates on implementing that state-federal partnership on the data collection on the recreational side. You know, Evan mentioned that they've been doing a lot of work in the Gulf. We also highlighted that there's a lot of needs elsewhere, and so just making sure that that's a regular point on our either full MAFAC agenda or on our subcommittee would be most appreciated.

And then, finally, recognizing the change that, hopefully, will be finalized soon with the Sportfishing and Boating Partnership Council. I can never get that across the finish line. And also recognizing that there could potentially be overlap and points where we could work together with that council that reports to Department of Interior but will also now report to Secretary of Commerce on recreational issues that we would kind of appreciate looking for an information exchange once that group is up and running to kind of talk about that.

So those were the three items. Thank you.

Ms. Lovett: I just want to clarify. This is Heidi. I just want to clarify one point. The charter has been established. The committee is in existence. It's just the appointments haven't been completely finalized, but it's imminent. And

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I just want to also add there are some very specific tasks that they were authorized to do in the authorizing language, so they'll be -- and I forgot what they are right now, but derelict boats and some other issues. But for sure what I can say on behalf of Russ and our agency is that we were able, in working with our colleagues at Department of Interior, we ensured there was an expansion of what was in the former charter of that group to be more embracing of ecosystems, climate, and some of the issues that are very much on your mind.

So, yes, I agree that there will be opportunities for that exchange.

Chair Davis: Okay. Thank you, Heidi. Thank you, Kellie. I think you should formalize the action, the charge that you all would like to work on. But could I have some feedback from the MAFAC in regards to what the rec subcommittee would like to work on? And if we need Kellie to repeat that, I'd be more than happy to have her do that.

VICE CHAIR RALSTON: Well, I guess I would see the charge as twofold. Part of it would just be that direct request for an agency response on that economic workshop report, and then, secondly, looking to the agency to develop a formal strategy, basically, to guide, improve -- and I'm reading here -- guide, improve, and streamline the collection and investment in recreational and noncommercial socioeconomic data, and then kind of looking at what facets we would like to highlight in that strategic plan. So that would be the charge for the subcommittee.

Chair Davis: Everybody in agreement? Any other comments around that? Okay. It sounds like a great direction forward, Kellie. Thank you.

Okay. Linda, thank you for updating us on your work.

Ms. ODierno: The commerce committee is looking at the seafood strategy and all four goals of the seafood strategy and looking at mechanisms to implement those particular goals. And what we focused on this morning was the whole question of fair and reciprocal trade, which is a

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major issue because of disparities in tariff rates for imports into the U.S. are usually zero tariff, exports can face hefty tariffs and hefty other non-tariff trade barriers. So we need some better way to communicate that to officials who are making trade policy.

And what we looked, it was the possibility of asking Fisheries to actually have an office focused more on trade. A lot of the fisheries' international policies deal with marine mammals, IUU fishing-specific topics out there, and we need some group that will focus on trade because seafood is such a confusing commodity. So we looked at the possibility of communicating with that office, asking them for a presentation on what they view as their role in facilitating trade.

What we viewed was essentially for Fisheries to provide input to the U.S. Trade Representative and to ITA about fishery-specific issues because they are so confusing. We looked that model of USDA, and USDA has a chief negotiator at USTR who deals with all agricultural products. And the pattern that they have is they have a set of advisory committees for different commodities to inform that negotiator.

So that's one possible scenario. The other was simply to have an office in Fisheries that can promote our agenda.

So we're still looking at those issues. The idea of an electronic export certificate that would kind of computerize the exporting process, and Alexa mentioned that they are working on that and we think that's an important consideration.

So those were the main issues with trade. We also looked at the idea of a proposed counsel, and Megan reminded us that the Seafood Nutrition Partnership is looking at a broader outreach program, but they are primarily focused on nutrition and represent international interests, as well as our interests.

There was a model of the Regional Fishery Development Foundations, and they were focused on economic gains. The only one of those that's still in existence is Alaska,

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and that might be a model that we could look at those regional groups that can respond to regional problems, which could help in the economic development. Better use of products. Like Richard talks about the squid. How could you use that squid and actually develop a fishery out of it, a directed fishery?

So those were some of the things we discussed this morning. We have a lot of work that we have to catch up on. Anybody want to add anything? Stefanie, any additions? Brett? Anybody else who was --

Ms. Moreland: Just an addition of the good communications work that the agency has been focused on with refining Fish Watch, and there's more of that opportunity that can be leveraged for a clearer understanding to customers and consumers that U.S. seafood is a good choice.

Mr. Veerhusen: And kind of to echo what was mentioned is re-reminding ourselves of the work that NOAA did on the National Seafood Council, making sure that we're not duplicative, as Linda was mentioning, a Seafood Nutrition partnership, and maybe there's a way to enhance that work.

And I think just for our next steps is the way I understood it is for the trade issues with USTR and Department of Ag is a meeting first with Alexa Cole and just getting a better understanding of who's where and some of the inner workings and then having subsequent meetings with those offices once we kind of know more about the functionality between NOAA and those offices, if any, and see how we can support that and build that.

And then there is kind of a step two is how do we bring more people into the tent? And so especially around trade and consumption, you know, is there an opportunity to work with more people, like us around the room, in addition, grocers, restaurants of all sizes, distributors, importers, exporters, so folks that also handle seafood. And that's kind of the step two.

Chair Davis: Those are great additions, Stefanie and

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Brett. I see Matt has his hand up. Matt, would you like to comment?

Mr. Upton: I just want to remind folks that we, hopefully, will keep folks on this because it's really a dynamic situation that, you know, things change very quickly in these markets. So it needs to be a continued focus of NMFS and the government in general to try to make sure that businesses are able to be competitive.

Chair Davis: Good point. Thank you for that. Jocelyn.

Dr. Runnebaum: Yes. Thank you. One of the questions I have that maybe Brett kind of answered, or I guess I have two questions. One is sort of just thinking about what role MAFAC can play in these conversations. I don't understand trade to the extent of some people sitting at this table, so I'm having a hard time envisioning what MAFAC's role would look like.

And then the second question I have is this responsive and maybe all-encompassing of Alexa's request for us to think about SIMP specifically?

Ms. ODierno: I think there are two separate issues here, one of which is responding to the seafood strategy and providing recommendations into mechanisms for implementing that seafood strategy and ones that certainly echo what the industry is saying they need if we're to grow. And we're kind of at a tipping point now with industry. We really have to do things to help that economic growth if we want to have fish for the future.

So I think that's one consideration, and the other are the asks from Alexa and to try to respond to those. And we talked about traceability being an important issue, and one of the problems is there are so many agencies involved. They all have data, and nobody is sharing that data. And the example that Stefanie brought up was Russian red crab entering the market, and it's in the market. Border Protection knows where it came from, though it was shipped through another country. They have traceability, but they can't share that data. So is there a better mechanism for handling those situations.

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Ms. Moreland: If I can comment on MAFAC role. One of the ways we're suffering is lack of clear roles and responsibilities, and so there's not specific trade expertise or outcome knowledge needed in order to figure out who has the ball on understanding U.S. interests in seafood and how does government work to incorporate that knowledge into trade policy.

Chair Davis: Yes, very good. Good clarification, too, Linda. And thank you, Stefanie. I think the commerce subcommittee on this topic has really clear direction in terms of where they want to go but a very complex charge in terms of -- but it's a really, really good direction, so thank you for your leadership on that and for the team that's working with you.

Okay. I'm going to turn over to the other commerce subcommittee working on Climate-Ready Fisheries, and I know that you all finished one aspect of your work and you're moving into, I believe, the how now.

Ms. Moore: Yes, that's correct. So the shortest version of what we do next is that we're moving to scope out and try to provide recommendations for the science-to-management gap issue, which is part two. Then I wrote a bunch of other things that we also can do under that, but we can just solve that in committee.

The nicest thing I'm going to do for you all is not make you talk to me on Monday. We're going to cancel that one and just pick back up on our next meeting on December 4. So you're welcome.

A few things that are on our plate. There's a lot going on, but I guess while I have some agency people I'll just say some of this. Like, I think we're interested in things like what is going on with the EBFM policy and roadmap updates, and we've been trying to connect with Jason Link to try to have him come and brief the subcommittee. And so we're interested, certainly, in doing that.

We know that there's a million things going on with OCAP, CEFI. I know technical guidance is being written for, like, specific management approaches by Wendy Morrison to

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help inform the IRA fund spending at the councils and those sorts of things.

I have such a long list of all the things. We also had great presentations for us to think about incorporating at this meeting and at our previous meeting.

And then what else do I have on my list? I guess one thing I just want to make sure that the agency knows is that this is all moving really, like, they're making a lot of progress on this, and I feel like there's sort of an open door invitation if you're like, you know what that subcommittee needs to know about this thing that we're doing, will you please tell us? Just reach out, and we'd be delighted to have that sort of feedback because we're going to try to grapple with this quickly, and we want our recommendations to be as targetedly helpful as possible and I think a very big picture thing. So I hope it's a dialogue, and we've certainly had really good support from staff, trying to figure out what we should focus on and work on.

I've lost the attention of some of the people who are going to help me make this decision, which is fair. But one thing that I wanted to flag that I think should be on our list, and I don't think we're at the right time yet and I also don't know if it's the climate subcommittee or climate ecosystem subcommittee, but I'm still deeply concerned about what happens when the agency hits the IRA funds gap in '26. And I don't know that that's what we need to do now. That's maybe what we do as a third thing. But I just want to highlight that's coming, and I think MAFAC should have an active role in trying to communicate out what some of those issues are. So that might be a joint project with the budget subcommittee, but it's a thing that's on my radar.

So those are things on our mind. But the core charge as the next thing we do is recommendations on science-to-management gap.

Chair Davis: Thank you very much, Meredith.

Close Out: Review of Action Items, Next Steps, and

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Next Meeting

Ms. Lovett: I'm going to do a few wrap-up comments, but hold those for a moment. And we want to allow Janet to say a few words since one of our colleagues has to leave early.

Ms. Coit:COIT: I'm going to take the time at the close of the meeting to recognize all of our members who are sadly departing MAFAC, but since Stefanie has to get going, I'm putting her first, okay? So I won't say anything more general because we're trying to -- yes. Okay.

But I want to, I think for each of you, I want to say a few words and then give you a round of applause. So Stefanie Moreland. Thank you, Stefanie. Stefanie brought her wealth of D.C. and Alaska experience to MAFAC when she came onboard. Having worked for a state, a large industry leader, and a senator, it's no wonder that she has a lot of expertise and perspectives and that she led your work on the budget recommendations as the chair of the strategic planning and budget Committee. Budget and strategic priorities have long been Stefanie's focus, including how the agency can better support industry's interest to expand domestic and foreign markets for U.S. fisheries and aquaculture products. And that's something even just a minute ago she spoke on and has really brought that issue and raised that issue time and time again.

During Stefanie's first year on MAFAC, she led discussions about the Saltonstall-Kennedy Grant program and its administration, and a few years later MAFAC passed recommendations to better align the S-K Grant program with priorities emerging from challenges facing U.S. harvesters and producers in the global seafood market. Those recommendations focused on increased funding for the S-K Grant program, consulting with MAFAC and other stakeholders about S-K priorities, and more focused criteria, including emphasizing the competitiveness of U.S. seafood production.

And I can't say for sure, but in 2022 the American Fisheries Advisory Committee Act was enacted to further involve industry and other voices in the developing the

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criteria, and I like to think that comes from Stefanie and MAFAC's work.

Stefanie carried the theme forward to the commerce subcommittee and worked to lead the recommendations to reestablish the National Seafood Council. In that work, she identified individuals and engagement interviews and helped frame the marketing, education, research, and promotional work that a council could engage in. This past year, Stefanie has expertly led the strategic planning and budget subcommittee, as many frank and direct questions and then the primary drafter of the recommendations you considered and endorsed today working closely with Brett.

Thank you so much, Stefanie. I always find your comments to be really clear and informed, your focus and your expertise to be so helpful in this context and others, and we appreciate your committee leadership and your participation on MAFAC over the last six years.

(Applause.)

Ms. Moreland: Thank you very much and great to be a part of this process and learned a lot from it and a great collaborative group. Appreciate it.

Ms. Coit: We will stay in touch with you and everyone here, and everyone will get a small token, a 200-year NOAA coin, it started with Thomas Jefferson, and that certificate of appreciation. So Heidi will help make sure you get those.

Ms. Moore: Thank you. I was just going to say I don't know when the subcommittee next steps conversation, if I need to say more about the equity next steps. You're going to say that. Great.

Chair Davis: Okay. I just had a couple of other things that MAFAC should be thinking about in the coming months. You all mentioned most of them, but there was a recommendation that we continue to have Sea Grant come and report out to us, so just making sure that Katie and Heidi know that we'd like that on the agenda.

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We also made a note that we wanted to make sure that the commissioners had more time for discussion because that was a very robust discussion, as well, but we were quite tight on time. So I want to make sure that that has more time.

We did not finish the team commitments, but I felt like there was a big endorsement that we should continue that. So maybe before some of us members roll off, we could actually do that virtually and we could join a small group and get the full committee to agree on that.

And then with Zach here, it triggered, I think, Meredith to say, yes, let's continue to work on the EEJ, so I think that was really great. And he also made a recommendation for MAFAC to be a little bit more diverse with indigenous and tribal.

So besides that, I think everything else was mentioned, and so I am going to turn it back over to Heidi who has some other types of business to discuss.

Ms. Lovett: Yes. So I wanted to share that we've been scouring the calendar in the spring looking for potential dates for that meeting, and we're always balancing that with another meeting that engages all of our senior leadership at NOAA Fisheries. But what I wanted to share is, tentatively, we are looking at May 13th to 17th, that week. So for those of you not with terms ending, if you have any conflicts with that week, May 13 to 17, please let us know, Katie or I.

And people have been asking where might that meeting be held, so, in the past, we've discussed and what you all have been suggesting is potentially Alaska or the Gulf of Mexico, which are two regions we haven't met in in quite a long time. So I don't know if there's any other input that you would like to share, anyone has any other thoughts about that. Not yet. Great. I mean, anybody from MAFAC, though. Jocelyn.

Dr. Runnebaum: I would just offer that Juneau is incredibly beautiful or Southeast Alaska is incredibly beautiful in April and May. Best times of year ever. But

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also Louisiana and New Orleans sounds great. Not to put Ryan on the hook but --

Mr. Fote: I'll just point out that May 17th is my birthday, my wife's birthday. It will be our 50th anniversary.

Ms. Lovett: At a fancy restaurant in New Orleans. Great. Well, I just wanted to share that, and that was really since Megan definitely went through what I had in my notes as far as actions. Megan covered them all.

Katie, was there anything else that you had taken note of?

Ms. Zanowicz: I think maybe having Zach come back, if he's able to, to provide any updates on things. I think having that more regularly at the meetings but understanding that he will be maybe leaving.

Chair Davis: Yes. Thank you for that, Katie. And could you also share the quote that he read from to MAFAC?

Ms. Zanowicz: Yes, I will send that. I have it.

Chair Davis: Okay. Thank you.

Ms. Lovett: So Janet would like to say a few more words, if she's ready, before we completely end our meeting.

Ms. Coit: I believe my words will fill more than the four minutes, so if anyone has to, does anyone have to rush out to catch a plane? Okay. Great. And I'll try not to be too wordy.

So I wanted to thank you. This was a fantastic meeting. Thank you to Sam and Cisco and Emily when she was here. The leadership of NOAA Fisheries, I think, benefitted greatly from this meeting, and I have a bunch of new information, inspiration, and ideas.

But now I'd like to turn to acknowledging the work of the seven MAFAC members, seven, whose second term will end in early 2024. So it's an amazing cohort of people. It's Megan Davis, Donna Kalez, Sara McDonald, Stefanie Moreland, Joe Schumacker, Matt Upton, and Richard

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Yamada. This is their last full in-person committee meeting.

First, the whole group has been fantastic. Four of you currently serve in leadership positions. Many of you were involved in drafting the National Seafood Council recommendations. Many of you engaged in the off-shore wind recommendations. You all contributed to the workforce development recommendations. This was really somewhat before my time, but you weathered the virtual meetings through COVID and kept MAFAC going, and it was wonderful when we were finally able to meet in person in Puerto Rico, which was, you know, my first time meeting most of you. But most importantly, you all shared your perspectives, your enthusiasm, your respect and engagement in our process, and that has helped MAFAC be successful and helped NOAA Fisheries be successful.

So I want to take a few minutes just to, as I did with Stefanie, say a few words about each of you.

So I'm starting with Sara, Sara McDonald. When Sara joined MAFAC, she brought a diverse background of experiences, having worked on marine mammal, bycatch fisheries, and with Seafood Watch. She stepped up early to chair the protected resources subcommittee and to serve on the ecosystems subcommittee, which she has continued her entire tenure. Sara added thoughtful comments to the off-shore wind recommendations, particularly concerning cumulative impacts and effects to science. Large whale entanglement issues were a concern to subcommittee members on both coasts, and all acknowledged it was unclear what MAFAC could bring to that conversation, which already had many, many voices.

A short statement was developed encouraging NOAA Fisheries to continue to fund and convene multi-stakeholder teams, identify conflicts with fishing effort, test gear modifications, and perform stranding network activities. It was fortuitous when Sara and the staff came together and honed in on one topic that MAFAC could work on in that regard: the need to understand potential deterrents and their effectiveness. So for the last three

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years, Sara has led an effort to develop a public survey to identify which marine mammal deterrents are most successful. The goal is to help NOAA Fisheries prioritize deterrents to further investigate for effectiveness in the future. And despite all the bureaucratic processes and due to Sara's leadership and tenacity, the survey is finally with OMB for final approval. A huge milestone. Thank you, Sara, the protected resources subcommittee, for getting it there. We greatly appreciate the dedication.

And, clearly, your work is not yet finished. You talked at this meeting about helping us with the IUU issues in the next few months. There's a lot to do on protected resources and other issues, and we appreciate your service and hope you'll stick with us right up until the end. Thank you, Sara.

(Applause.)

Dr. McDonald: Thank you. And I'm sorry that the survey was not implemented before I left, so I'm bequeathing it to Pat as my legacy. But, yes, the survey was actually developed within six months, and it's just been in the PRA kind of mired in the bureaucratic process for the two and a half years. So thank you, Katie, for getting it finally to OMB. We so appreciate that. So I do apologize, I wish I could have finished my work, but this has been a great experience and I have a lot of respect for everybody here. And I hope you guys, I encourage you to keep up all the good work.

Ms. Coit: Thank you, Sara. We will aim for that as a goal. Joe. Joe Schumacker. Joe brought years of experience and extensive knowledge of Pacific Northwest tribal fisheries and resource management and helped ensure MAFAC's work captured tribal perspectives and always comes to the meetings with a lot of energy and a great positive attitude.

Joe was already familiar with what it meant to serve on an advisory board, having served on the former marine protected area FAC. And we greatly appreciated Joe's leadership and comments today on the off-shore wind working group and his contribution to those

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recommendations.

Joe helped guide and lead the recommendations developed by the seafood workforce development group, a topic we heard from Chuck Weirich on today. Joe served as an active member of the climate and ecosystem subcommittee and protected resources subcommittee.

Thinking back on the past few years as I've been here and Joe's entire tenure, he consistently demonstrated his commitment and passion as an active member of MAFAC. I'm told he attended meetings of all the various subcommittees at one time or another. He was a very active participant on the seafood promotion task group.

Joe, thank you for always being willing to lend a hand, share your perspective, and bring an important tribal perspective to this group. We've benefitted from that. Thank you.

(Applause.)

Mr. Schumacker: Yes, thank you, Janet. Thank you kindly. And thank you to this group and the many iterations of it that I've worked with through the years here. It's a great team of people that do good, good work. So really appreciate the camaraderie and the collaboration and the products that come out of this group and the connection with NOAA Fisheries leadership in particular, as well.

I just want to say that I've got a great person coming in that will sit in this seat, so to speak, Jennifer Hagen. And one thing that I've always made a point of with this group is trying to welcome new people when they come in. So as you have all these new folks come in, please welcome them. Get to know them all. You all are good at that anyway, but make them feel comfortable and become a real sharing part of this group.

Thank you all.

(Applause.)

Ms. Coit: Thank you, Joe. Thank you for saying that.

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Richard, Richard Yamada. There you are. Richard's extensive recreational fishing background, knowledge of international halibut management, overall experience with Alaska fisheries and the unique management strategies employed there has made him a key member of the recreational fisheries subcommittee at MAFAC. Along with Robert Jones, Richard identified the need to better define the universe of off-shore recreational anglers, which led to the report of the same name. He's contributed his unique recreational fishing insights to the workforce development working group, ensuring that the recommendations highlighted gaps and areas of opportunity related to the recreational fishing industry.

I know you'll continue your service, Richard, on the International Pacific Halibut Commission. And we really benefitted from and appreciate your service on MAFAC, and we'll miss you.

(Applause.)

Mr. Yamada: Thank you. And really appreciate the caliber of people that sit on MAFAC. I talked to Clay. I was trying to get Clay on for a couple of years, and he was resistant to that. And I said, you know, Clay, you're going to learn so much coming to this level of discussion, and, you know, and it's a perspective that will help you look at what you do at home differently, as well, because the caliber of people here, I mean, and we've had talks since and he's really appreciative of being on MAFAC. And I wish anybody that, you know, we would recruit, we recruit the kind of people that have the kind of dedication that everybody shows at this table, and the dedication is very appreciative. Thank you for -- I'm sure we'll still stay in contact, so we'll see you maybe in Alaska. Thanks.

Ms. Coit: Another vote for Alaska. Richard, I just want to reemphasize what several of us said at the start, which is there's a new opportunity. We're losing so many fine people. There's a new opportunity, so please do help recruit and spread the word.

I'm so glad Matt was able to join us, Matt Upton, virtually, as I mentioned earlier. And, Matt, any news yet, Matt?

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Mr. Upton: No, but I'm glad I'm here and wouldn't want to miss the birth of my first child. So sorry to be missing everyone, not there in person. I wish I could have participated more.

Ms. Coit: Well, Matt, we appreciate you being here virtually, and I'm so glad I got to see you last week. Matt came to MAFAC as a lawyer, a manager of vessel operations for U.S. Seafood, an experienced commercial fisherman, having worked on both the East and the West Coasts, something that was unique at that time.

Matt always brings thoughtful comments, industry and business perspectives, and a lot of energy to MAFAC discussions. I was teasing him that you never know what he's thinking by looking at his face.

(Laughter.)

Ms. Coit: Matt has been active on at least three different subcommittees: commerce, strategic planning and budget, and climate and ecosystems, as well as the workforce development management group. And he was an active member of the seafood promotion task group, which, as mentioned, developed the National Seafood Council report.

Matt, we wish you the very best. Please know we're thinking about you as you leave MAFAC and embark on an exciting new phase of your life.

(Applause.)

Mr. Upton: Thanks, everyone. It was just an honor to get to spend time with the folks on MAFAC. I really appreciate NMFS leadership for all the work you put in to hearing our concerns and implementing them. And for me, working in fisheries management is always about the people that I meet and what I learn and, again, to kind of share what I hear from folks working on the water. So keep up the good work, everybody, and I hope to see many of you in other meetings. And if you come through Seattle, please drop me a line.

Ms. Coit: Thank you, Matt.

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(Applause.)

Ms. Coit: Donna could not join us. She had a family event. But I'm so glad that we last met in San Diego because that was really important to Donna, and we were able to also some of us join her afterwards for an important field trip.

As you know, Donna brought her new perspective as a business owner, a manager of Dana Landing Marina, active member of the Sportfishing Association of California. She's been very involved in the development of the deterrence survey that I mentioned earlier when talking about Sara. And one important target group for that survey is marina owners, and she's quite well connected in that area.

Donna led in the past year the discussions on the development of recommendations on our updated national saltwater recreational fisheries policy. She worked really closely with Russ on the oversight of the recreational electronic reporting working group and its report.

I'm sorry that she misses that meeting. I know we've all enjoyed our interactions with Donna, who has often brought her husband to the meetings and her enthusiasm. We will send her the recognition that she certainly missed today.

(Applause.)

Ms. Coit: And lastly, but certainly not least, I want to say such a special thank you to Megan, Megan Davis, for serving as the MAFAC chair the past two years. She's done an incredible job, I think, setting the tone and making our meetings effective and efficient and productive and pleasant.

Before taking the chair role, Megan was active on protected resources, climate and ecosystems, and commerce subcommittees, which reflect her long career as a leader in the queen conch research aquaculture restoration and conservation, and the field trip that she

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organized when we were in Puerto Rico to Naguabo Bay and visiting with the fishermen, the partners, the lab, that was really a standout, certainly, for me and I think for all of us to see how respected and how engaged she is with the community and the impact that she's having there.

Megan's leadership showed up when she helped guide the MAFAC seafood promotion task group. She's the major drafter of that report and conducted numerous industry interviews and has become a real champion supporting better marketing and education about the importance of nutritious seafood.

Sometimes, it's hard as chair because you don't have as much opportunity to share your perspectives, but your integrity and expertise and experience just shine through and you've really made such a huge impact on all of us here for your leadership at MAFAC. And I think the conversation that you'll complete about values demonstrates what you bring here.

So thank you so much for your leadership and your friendship, Megan. We will really miss you here.

(Applause.)

Chair Davis: Thank you so much for those kind words and to all of you for your kindness, as well. Being chair is something I never thought I would do, so when I was asked to do this position I did it with a lot of encouragement and because I knew that working with all of you is so comfortable and so professional. So for me, this has been a real highlight of my professional career to be able to chair and be on MAFAC and be with all of you and learn about all of your backgrounds the amazing work that you all do and then also to have this relationship with leadership and NOAA staff, as well. I think it's incredible that we can be ambassadors really as we go forward when we leave the meetings. We don't just leave here, and I see that as all of us go out forward.

And so I will continue to be an ambassador and to support the great work that you all do. So thank you for this opportunity.

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(Applause.)

Ms. Coit: Thank you. Thank you all. We so appreciate your dedication and your time and your engagement. And I've learned a lot from you.

So as I mentioned, several of the outgoing members have held leadership roles, hold leadership roles, in MAFAC. So with their departure, it is a good time to announce the MAFAC members who will be taking on new leadership roles. Our charter designated NOAA to select the chair and the vice chair, so I'm honored to be able to do that and to announce some new leadership. Each of these individuals have already stepped up, have been very, very engaged on MAFAC's work.

So I'm going to start with some committees. Once Donna's term ends, Pat Sullivan has been asked to chair the recreational fisheries subcommittee. Brett, I never know how to say it, Veerhusen will become the chair for the strategic planning and budget subcommittee, filling Stefanie's role.

Kellie Ralston has agreed to continue on as vice chair of MAFAC for the time being. And, finally, I'm excited to announce that Jocelyn Runnebaum has agreed to serve as the MAFAC chair. So great, great confidence and excitement about Jocelyn continuing on and following in Megan's footsteps.

So thank you so much for taking on these leadership roles. Really, really appreciate it.

And the last thing I want to say is a thank you again to Heidi and to Katie and to Gabby and the other staff from the policy office. Jenni Wallace was here earlier. Thank you for all that you've done to put on this meeting. It is a wonderful coming together of people, and we're all very excited to continue to work together with you.

(Applause.)

Chair Davis: Thank you so much, Janet. I would like to close this meeting in partnership with Jocelyn and officially pass over the gavel.

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(Applause.)

(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went off the record at 12:45 p.m.)

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